

Richard Wagner

Das Rheingold

CONDUCTOR
James Levine

PRODUCTION
Robert Lepage

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
Neilson Vignola

SET DESIGNER
Carl Fillion

COSTUME DESIGNER
François St-Aubin

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Etienne Boucher

VIDEO IMAGE ARTIST
Boris Firquet

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

Libretto by the composer

Saturday, October 9, 2010, 1:00–3:35 pm

New Production

The production of *Das Rheingold* was made possible by a generous gift from Ann Ziff and the Ziff Family, in memory of William Ziff.

In collaboration with Ex Machina

The Metropolitan Opera

2010–11 Season

The 158th Metropolitan Opera performance of

Richard Wagner's

Das Rheingold

CONDUCTOR

James Levine

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Woglinde

Lisette Oropesa**

Fafner

Hans-Peter König

Wellgunde

Jennifer Johnson*

Froh

Adam Diegel

Flosshilde

Tamara Mumford**

Donner

Dwayne Croft**

Alberich

Eric Owens

Loge

Richard Croft

Fricka

Stephanie Blythe**

Mime

Gerhard Siegel

Wotan

Bryn Terfel

Erda

Patricia Bardon

Freia

Wendy Bryn Harmer**

Fasolt

Franz-Josef Selig

Saturday, October 9, 2010, 1:00–3:35 pm

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The Met: Live in HD series is made possible by a generous grant from its founding sponsor, the **Neubauer Family Foundation**.

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Musical Preparation **Linda Hall, John Keenan, Robert Morrison, Howard Watkins, Joshua Greene, and Carol Isaac**

Assistant Stage Directors **David Kneuss, J. Knighten Smit, and Paula Williams**

German Coach **Irene Spiegelman**

Prompter **Carol Isaac**

Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and painted by **Scène Éthique (Varenes, Québec)** and **Metropolitan Opera Shops**

Costumes executed by **Atelier de couture Sonya B. (Montréal, Québec)** and **Metropolitan Opera Costume Department**

Wigs executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig Department**

EX MACHINA PRODUCTION STAFF

Artistic Consultant **Rebecca Blankenship**

Interactive Content Designers **Réalisations.net**

Production Manager **Bernard Gilbert**, Assistant **Viviane Paradis**

Technical Director **Michel Gosselin**, Assistant **Eric Gautron**

Automation Designer **Tobie Horswill**

Video Project Manager **Catherine Guay**

Special Effects Integrator **Philippe Jean**

Initial Interactive Video Designer **Holger Förterer**

Properties Project Manager **Stéphane Longpré**

Rig & Safety Adviser **Guy St-Amour**

Costume Project Manager **Charline Boulerice**, Assistant **Jessica Poirier-Chang**

Rehearsal Stage Manager **Félix Dagenais**

Production Coordinator **Vanessa Landry-Claverie**

Producer **Michel Bernatchez**

This production uses flash effects.

Projectors provided by **Panasonic**

Projection technology consultants **Scharff Weisberg**

Additional projection equipment **Christie Digital**

This performance is made possible in part by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

Before the performance begins, please switch off cell phones and other electronic devices. Latecomers will not be admitted during the performance.

* Member of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program

** Graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program

Synopsis

In the depths of the Rhine, the three Rhinemaidens guard the Rhinegold, a treasure of immeasurable value. The Nibelung dwarf Alberich is dazzled by the sight of it. The girls explain that whoever wins the gold will gain power over the world, but must first renounce love. Frustrated by his unsuccessful attempts to catch one of the girls, Alberich curses love and steals the gold.

Wotan, lord of the gods, is reproached by his wife Fricka: he has promised to give Freia, goddess of youth, to the giants Fasolt and Fafner in return for their building a fortress for the gods. When the giants demand their reward, Loge, the god of fire, suggests an alternative payment: the ring that Alberich has forged from the Rhinegold and his other treasures. The giants agree, and Wotan and Loge hurry off to the Nibelungs' underground home.

Here they meet Alberich's brother Mime, who has forged the Tarnhelm, a magic helmet that transforms its wearer into any shape. Mime tells Wotan and Loge how Alberich has enslaved the Nibelungs to work for him. Alberich appears and mocks the gods. Loge asks for a demonstration of the Tarnhelm and Alberich turns himself into a dragon, then into a toad, which the gods capture. Dragged to the surface, the dwarf is forced to summon the Nibelungs to heap up the gold. Wotan wrests the ring from his finger. Shattered, Alberich curses the ring: ceaseless worry and death shall be the destiny of its bearer.

The giants return and agree to accept the gold. The gods have to give up even the Tarnhelm, but Wotan refuses to part with the ring. Erda, goddess of the earth, appears and warns him that possession of it will bring about the end of the gods. Wotan reluctantly gives the ring to the giants, and Alberich's curse claims its first victim as Fafner kills his brother in a dispute over the treasure. As the voices of the Rhinemaidens are heard, lamenting the loss of their gold, the gods walk toward their new home, which Wotan names Valhalla.

Met Titles

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Richard Wagner

Das Rheingold

Premiere: Munich Court Theater, 1869

Conceived by Wagner as a prologue to his monumental *Ring of the Nibelung*, this work sets forth the dramatic and theoretical issues that play out in the three subsequent music dramas. The confrontations and dialogue in *Das Rheingold* are punctuated by thrilling musical and dramatic coups, and the entire work (written without an intermission) has a magnificent sweep. A single crime committed toward the beginning of *Das Rheingold* sets in motion the course of events that will eventually alter the order of the universe by the end of the *Ring* tetralogy: the theft of gold from the depths of the Rhine River by the dwarf Alberich, who uses it to forge a ring that will give him unlimited power. When Wotan, lord of the gods, steals this ring from him to secure his rule, Alberich curses the ring and anyone who will ever own it. With *Das Rheingold*, Wagner fully realized his much-discussed system of leitmotifs (musical themes associated with specific things, people, or ideas). This technique is at its most accessible in this opera; in the later parts of the *Ring*, the number of leitmotifs multiplies, their use becoming more and more ambitious and intricate.

The Creator

Richard Wagner (1813–1883) was the complex, controversial creator of music-drama masterpieces that stand at the center of today's operatic repertory. Born in Leipzig, Germany, he was an artistic revolutionary who reimagined every supposition about music and theater. Wagner wrote his own librettos, insisting that words and music were equal in his works. This approach led to the idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or "total work of art," a notion that has had an impact on creative fields far beyond opera.

The Setting

The action of *Das Rheingold* takes place in mythic locales below and above (symbolically, at least) the earth: the depths of the Rhine River, mountaintops, and the caves of the toiling dwarves. The time is an unspecified era before history, where the actions of human beings do not yet affect the universal order of things. Time itself is fluid in this work: the gods immediately begin to age when they are deprived of the golden apples of youth in Scene 2.

The Music

The score of *Das Rheingold* may be the least familiar of the four *Ring* operas—there are no set pieces appropriate for concert performance, such as the Ride of the Valkyries from *Die Walküre* or Siegfried's Rhine Journey from *Götterdämmerung*. Yet it contains some of the most striking music in Wagner's vast output. The uniqueness of this score is apparent from the opening bars—an exploration of an E-flat major chord that evolves for almost four minutes before finally bursting into melody. Dramatically, this is a concise musical depiction of creation, from undifferentiated primordial matter to evolution and diversification and finally, with the appearance of the Rhinemaidens, speech. A number of deft touches keep recognizably human elements at the center of the *Ring's* philosophy, among them the bright and delightful music for the Rhinemaidens, which describes the primal innocence of nature, and the doltish giant Fasolt's lyrical music as he longs for the love of the beautiful goddess Freia. Among the highly unusual effects in the score are the cacophonously rhythmic anvils in the dramatic "descent into Nibelheim" interlude that separates Scenes 2 and 3, and the six harps depicting the churning waves of the Rhine in the monumental finale.

Das Rheingold at the Met

This opera was first seen at the Met in 1889, as part of the first complete *Ring* cycle in the western hemisphere. The last of the four parts of the *Ring* to be produced, it was conducted by Anton Seidl, the Hungarian maestro who had been Wagner's assistant at the first presentation of the *Ring* in Bayreuth 13 years earlier. A new production in 1899 starring the Dutch sensation Anton van Rooy as Wotan inaugurated the first complete, uncut performance of the *Ring* in North America. Two more new productions of the *Ring*, the first also starring van Rooy, followed in 1903–04 and 1913–14. The latter lasted until 1948, when it was replaced by another complete and uncut production of the cycle. Herbert von Karajan directed and conducted performances of *Das Rheingold* in 1967, with Thomas Stewart as Wotan and other roles taken on by such stars as Josephine Veasey, Gerhard Stolze, Edda Moser (all three in their debuts), Lilli Chookasian, Martti Talvela, Karl Ridderbusch, and Sherrill Milnes. That was followed by a production directed by Otto Schenk in 1987 with James Levine conducting, James Morris as Wotan, Waltraud Meier in her Met debut, and Franz Mazura, Siegfried Jerusalem, John Macurdy, and Aage Haugland. This season's new production by Robert Lepage introduces his new *Ring* cycle, which is the company's eighth staging and is being unveiled over two seasons.

Program Note

In all of Western culture there is nothing quite like Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* ("The Ring of the Nibelung"). Based on Wagner's own retelling of stories from ancient German and Icelandic mythology, it consists of four separate but intimately related operas—some of them among the longest ever written—usually performed over the space of a week.

Das Rheingold is the first chapter in this epic tale, and it is—quite unfairly—sometimes not given the respect accorded other parts of the *Ring*. For one thing, it is by far the shortest. At two and a half hours it is one of Wagner's shortest operas, about the same length as *Der Fliegende Holländer*. The composer himself inadvertently contributed to this slighting of *Rheingold* by calling it a "preliminary evening" to the rest of the *Ring*.

After finishing *Lohengrin* in 1848, Wagner wrote the libretto—or, as he liked to say, poem—to a new opera, *Siegfried's Death* (known today as *Götterdämmerung*). Realizing that he needed to explain how the events of that opera had come to be, he added *Young Siegfried* (the opera we now know as *Siegfried*) in 1851. The following year, feeling further explanation was needed, he finished the libretto of *Die Walküre*.

"In order to give everything completely, these three dramas must be preceded by a grand introductory play: *The Rape of the Rheingold*," Wagner wrote to Franz Liszt. "The object is the complete representation of everything in regard to this rape: the origin of the Nibelung treasure, the possession of this treasure by Wotan, and the curse of Alberich.... [By writing this separate drama] I gain sufficient space to intensify the wealth of relationship, while in the previous mode of treatment I was compelled to cut down and enfeeble this."

While Wagner was creating the libretto to his stupendous new work, he was also writing books and pamphlets—on theatrical reform, on opera and drama, and the artwork of the future. As his ideas on the nature of opera changed, so did the nature of his libretti. *Götterdämmerung* has marvelous monologues, a thrilling love duet, a sensational vengeance trio—all of which can be excerpted and performed on their own (as can some of the orchestral passages). By the time Wagner had arrived at *Das Rheingold* in 1852, he had come to the conclusion that the drama should not be interrupted by musical set pieces but ought to unfold seamlessly.

The vocal writing therefore had to be different from the way singers had been treated in operas before. At the same time, the orchestra would become as much an integral part of conveying the drama as the soloists onstage. "The music shall sound in such a fashion that people shall hear what they cannot see," Wagner wrote to Liszt. In fact, sketches show that as Wagner was in the preliminary stages of composition he was not only thinking of the words, but of the stage directions as well, writing music that reflected the movement of the scene.

In order to realize his new conception of music drama, Wagner developed the system of leitmotifs—short segments of melody, rhythm, or harmony that are associated with a character, a dramatic event, an object, or an emotion. Beginning with *Rheingold*, Wagner's music springs almost entirely from these building blocks, which he molds or combines to reflect shifts in the drama on stage. But his leitmotifs are much more than mere musical "sign posts." They can let the audience know what a character is thinking or why an event is taking place. Musical motifs relating to specific characters or situations were nothing new in opera at the time, but the degree to which Wagner employed this idea had no precedent. "I am spinning my cocoon like a silkworm," he wrote to Liszt as he was working on *Rheingold*, "but I spin it out of myself." (Though the libretti to the *Ring* operas were written in reverse order, the music was composed from the beginning of the cycle to the end.)

One of the most difficult tasks Wagner faced was how to begin *Das Rheingold*. What kind of music could possibly launch not just this opera, but the entire *Ring* cycle? He later related the events that inspired the creation of the prelude (as always with Wagner, his reminiscences are to be taken with a grain of salt). He had gone for a long walk, then returned to take a nap. Falling into a state of half-sleep, he suddenly felt as if he were sinking into a flood of water: "The rush and roar soon took musical shape within my brain as the chord of E-flat major, surging incessantly in broken chords: these declared themselves as melodic figurations of increasing motion, yet the pure triad of E-flat major never changed.... I awoke from my half-sleep in terror, feeling as though the waves were now rushing high above my head. I at once recognized that the orchestral prelude to the *Rheingold*, which for a long time I must have carried about within me, yet had never been able to fix definitely, had at last come into being in me: and I quickly understood the very essence of my own nature: the stream of life was not to flow to me from without, but from within."

There is nothing in all of opera like this miraculous beginning: a low E flat softly played by the doubles basses, then, four measures later, a B flat added by the bassoons. Another 12 measure later a single French horn ("very sweetly" says the score) intones the notes of the E-flat major triad up the scale for over two octaves, followed by a second horn, then another, until all eight horns are playing waves of arpeggios, all on the three notes of the E-flat major triad. Then the cellos and eventually the entire orchestra join in. It's a musical depiction of the creation of life, growing from a single cell. At the climax, the Rhinemaidens suddenly break into song—representing joyous, unspoiled nature itself.

In addition to writing music unlike anything heard before, with the *Ring* Wagner was making demands on the physical stage that went beyond what seemed even possible at the time: the opening scene of the Rhinemaidens swimming around as if in mid-air; the shift from the depths of the Rhine to the

airy mountaintops of the gods, with Valhalla seen in the distance; the descent to Nibelheim and the journey back; Donner, the god of thunder, summoning the swirling mists, then dissipating them on cue with his hammer, conjuring up a rainbow bridge over which the gods would walk to their new home...

Wagner eventually overcame all the musical, scenic, and dramatic challenges he had created. The fact that he not only managed to do so, but that the whole of the *Ring* cycle seems to flow effortlessly from *Das Rheingold*, raises its stature from a mere prologue to a theatrical masterpiece all on its own.

Wagner did not wish for any part of the *Ring* to be staged until the cycle could be presented as a whole. He realized this would require a "great festival, to be arranged perhaps especially for the purpose of this performance," as he had already mentioned to Liszt before a note of the music had been written. But against Wagner's wishes, *Das Rheingold* had its premiere in Munich on September 22, 1869, on the express orders of the composer's ardent admirer and patron, King Ludwig II. Another seven years would pass before Wagner was able to present the *Ring* in its entirety, in the theater at Bayreuth that was built specifically for it (and that still serves as the home of the annual Wagner festival).

Das Rheingold was first heard at the Met on January 4, 1889. The program carried a note stating that, "For this opera the scenery has been ordered from Germany and the costumes and armor are from the designs of Prof. Doepier, who made the original drawings for Richard Wagner." The one-act opera was presented with an intermission between the second and third scenes. "This is the practice of the Imperial Opera House in Vienna, and though open to objection on artistic grounds will doubtless prove a welcome relief," noted one New York newspaper the day before the premiere. In fact, Wagner himself had raised no objections to a break when *Rheingold* was given in Berlin in 1881. The Met presented the work both with and without intermission well into the 20th century. In Robert Lepage's new production, the drama will unfold in one uninterrupted act, as the composer conceived it. —Paul Thomason

The Cast and Creative Team



James Levine

MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR (CINCINNATI, OHIO)

MET HISTORY Since his 1971 company debut leading *Tosca*, he has conducted nearly 2,500 operatic performances at the Met—more than any other conductor in the company's history. Of the 83 operas he has led here, 13 were company premieres (including *Stiffelio*, *I Lombardi*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *La Cenerentola*, *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Erwartung*, *Moses und Aron*, *Idomeneo*, and *La Clemenza di Tito*). He also led the world premieres of Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* and Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*.

THIS SEASON In his 40th anniversary season at the Met, he conducts the opening night new production premiere of *Das Rheingold*, the new production in the spring of *Die Walküre*, and revivals of *Simon Boccanegra*, *Don Pasquale*, *Il Trovatore*, and *Wozzeck*, as well as performances of *The Bartered Bride* at The Juilliard School and *Don Carlo* and *La Bohème* during the Met's Japan tour. He also leads the MET Orchestra and Boston Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall and the MET Chamber Ensemble at Weill and Zankel Hall there. Maestro Levine returns to the Boston Symphony Orchestra for his seventh season as music director, leading the world premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's violin concerto; three of John Harbison's symphonies; Schumann and Mahler symphonies for major anniversaries of their births; and music of Wagner, Mozart, Bartók, Stravinsky, and Schoenberg. He makes his debut with the Staatskapelle Berlin (Mahler's Sixth Symphony) in May before taking the Met company on tour to Japan for the fifth time, where he will celebrate the 40th anniversary of his debut on June 5 in Nagoya with *Don Carlo*.



Robert Lepage

DIRECTOR (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met and *Totem* currently touring with Cirque du Soleil.

MET PRODUCTION *La Damnation de Faust* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is versatile in every form of theater craft, working extensively as a director, scenic artist, playwright, actor, and film director. In 1984 his play *Circulations* toured Canada, which was quickly followed by *The Dragon's Trilogy*, *Vinci*, *Polygraph*, and *Tectonic Plates*. From 1989 to 1993 he was artistic director of the Théâtre Français at Ottawa's National Arts Centre and in 1992 he became the first North American to direct a Shakespeare play at London's National Theatre. He founded his multidisciplinary production company, Ex Machina, in 1994, and under his artistic direction this new team produced a steady output of plays, including *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and a solo production of *Elsinore*. He wrote and directed his first feature film, *Le Confessionnal*, in 1994 and went on to direct films of *The Polygraph*,

Nô, *Possible Worlds*, and an adaptation of his play *The Far Side of the Moon*. In 1997 he opened The Caserne, a multidisciplinary production center in Quebec City where he and his team have since created and produced projects that include opera productions, film projects, and theatrical and visual works. He is the creator and director of Cirque du Soleil's *KÀ* (a permanent show currently in residence in Las Vegas), and his operatic directorial projects include *The Rake's Progress* for Brussels's La Monnaie (2007), Lorin Maazel's *1984* for Covent Garden (2005), *Bluebeard's Castle* and *Erwartung* for the Canadian Opera Company (1992), and *La Damnation de Faust*, which was seen in Japan in 1999 and in Paris in 2001, 2004, and 2006.



Nelson Vignola

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTION *La Damnation de Faust* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been director of productions for numerous festivals in Quebec, including the International Festival of New Dance and the Festival de Théâtre des Amériques. Since 1981 he has worked on many productions with the Quebec Opera, and he was the director of productions for the Montreal Opera from 1990 to 1993. He has collaborated with Robert Lepage and Ex Machina on *La Damnation de Faust* (Japan's Saito Kinen Festival and at Paris's Bastille Opera), Maazel's *1984* (Covent Garden), and *The Rake's Progress* (La Monnaie in Brussels). He has been technical director and tour manager for Cirque du Soleil's *Saltimbanco*, worked with Lepage on Cirque du Soleil's permanent show *KÀ*, now in residence in Las Vegas, and was director of creation for the company's permanent show in Macao, *Zaia*. He worked again with Lepage on Cirque du Soleil's latest touring show, *Totem*, which opened last May in Montreal.



Carl Fillion

SET DESIGNER (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTION *La Damnation de Faust* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Since creating the set designs for Robert Lepage's play *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* in 1993, he has worked with the director and Ex Machina on 15 productions, including *Elsinore*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Geometry of Miracles*, *La Celestina*, *Jean-Sans-Nom*, and the operas *La Damnation de Faust*, *1984*, and *The Rake's Progress*. In addition to Lepage, he has worked with various directors in Quebec and Europe on productions such as *Simon Boccanegra* for Barcelona's Liceu, *The Burial at Thebes* for Dublin's Abbey Theatre, and with Montreal's Cirque du Soleil.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



François St-Aubin

COSTUME DESIGNER (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* for his debut and *Die Walküre* at the Met and *Macbeth* in Sydney and Melbourne.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has worked with Robert Lepage since 20007, when he designed costumes for *The Blue Dragon*. Since graduating from Canada's National Theatre School he has designed costumes for more than 80 theater productions, a dozen operas, and several contemporary dance companies. Work with Canada's Stratford Festival includes costumes for *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *An Ideal Husband*, and *Don Juan*. He has also designed costumes for *Carmen* for Montreal Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, and San Diego Opera, and *Macbeth* for Montreal Opera and Opera Australia.



Étienne Boucher

LIGHTING DESIGNER (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* for his debut and *Die Walküre* at the Met and *Totem*, currently touring with Cirque du Soleil.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has worked on more than 100 productions for theater, dance, musical comedy, and opera since 1999. He has worked with Ex Machina and Robert Lepage since 2004, developing their work together on shows that include *La Celestina*, *Lipsynch*, *The Rake's Progress*, and *Le Rossignol and Other Fables*.



Boris Firquet

VIDEO IMAGE ARTIST (QUEBEC CITY, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTION *La Damnation de Faust* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been making experimental videos since 1988 and since 1996 has been interested in live stage video. He creates almost all of his own custom software and his video works have been presented at numerous venues, including Quebec City's Mois Multi Festival, the Victoriaville Festival of Contemporary Music, Toronto's Images Festival, Montreal's FCMM, Tokyo Video Festival, Berlin's Transmediale, Marseille's Vidéochroniques, and the Liège International Video Festival. In opera he has collaborated with Robert Lepage on *The Rake's Progress* for La Monnaie in Brussels, with subsequent performances in Lyon, San Francisco, London, and Madrid.



Patricia Bardon

MEZZO-SOPRANO (DUBLIN, IRELAND)

THIS SEASON Erda in *Das Rheingold* at the Met, Azucena in *Il Trovatore* with Welsh National Opera, the title role of Handel's *Rinaldo* at the Cologne Opera, and the Nurse in Dukas's *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* at Barcelona's Liceu.

MET APPEARANCES Cornelia in *Giulio Cesare* (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS The title role of Handel's *Tamerlano* at Vienna's Theater an der Wien and for her debut last season with the Los Angeles Opera, Ottavia in Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at the Oslo Opera, Rosmira in Handel's *Partenope* and Maurya in Vaughan-Williams's *Riders to the Sea* at English National Opera, Baba the Turk in *The Rake's Progress* at Covent Garden, the title role of Saariaho's *Adriana Mater* for her debut at the Paris Opera, and Andronico in Handel's *Tamerlano* for her debut with Washington National Opera. She has also sung the title role of *Tancredi* and Arsace in *Semiramide* at Venice's La Fenice and Rosmira with Lyric Opera of Chicago.



Stephanie Blythe

MEZZO-SOPRANO (MONGAUP VALLEY, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Fricka in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met, Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and Katisha in *The Mikado* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, and concerts at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and Carnegie Hall.

MET APPEARANCES More than 150 performances of 24 roles, including Orfeo in *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Ježibaba in *Rusalka*, Ulrica, Cornelia in *Giulio Cesare*, Jocasta in *Oedipus Rex*, Eduige in *Rodelinda*, Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*, Baba the Turk in *The Rake's Progress*, and the Alto Solo in *Parsifal* (debut, 1995).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Azucena in *Il Trovatore* for her debut at the San Francisco Opera, Baba the Turk at Covent Garden, Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus* at the Arizona Opera, Amneris in *Aida* at the Pittsburgh Opera, Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri* and Carmen in Seattle, Azucena and Mistress Quickly at Covent Garden, Isabella in Philadelphia and Santa Fe, and Cornelia and Mistress Quickly at the Paris Opera. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



Wendy Bryn Harmer

SOPRANO (ROSEVILLE, CALIFORNIA)

THIS SEASON Freia in *Das Rheingold*, Ortlinde in *Die Walküre*, and The First Lady in *The Magic Flute* at the Met, and a recital at Carnegie Hall as part of Marilyn Horne's "The Song Continues" series.

MET APPEARANCES Chloë in *The Queen of Spades*, the Third Norn in *Götterdämmerung*, First Bridesmaid in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (debut, 2005), a Flower Maiden in *Parsifal*, Bařena in *Jenůfa*, a Servant in *Die Ägyptische Helena*, and Dunyasha in *War and Peace*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Wanda in *La Grande-Duchesse de Gėrolstein* and Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito* with Opera Boston, Adalgisa in *Norma* at the Palm Beach Opera, Mimì in *La Bohème* at the Utah Opera Festival, and Gerhilde in *Die Walküre* for her debut with the San Francisco Opera. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Richard Croft

TENOR (COOPERSTOWN, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Loge in *Das Rheingold* at the Met, Hyllus in Handel's *Hercules* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Idomeneo at Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, and Handel's *Messiah* in concert with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES Gandhi in *Satyagraha*, Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (debut, 1991), Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, and Cassio in *Otello*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Ubaldo in *Armida* at the Salzburg Festival, Idomeneo in Salzburg and for his debut at La Scala, and Jupiter in Handel's *Semele* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. He has also sung Lurcanio in *Ariodante* with the San Francisco Opera, Don Ottavio with the Seattle Opera and Paris's Bastille Opera, Count Almaviva with the Berlin State Opera, Tacmas in Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes* at Paris's Palais Garnier, and Abaris in Rameau's *Les Boréades* with the Zurich Opera.



Hans-Peter König

BASS (DÜSSELDORF, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Fafner in *Das Rheingold* and Hunding in *Die Walküre* at the Met, Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer* and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* in Düsseldorf, Gurnemanz in *Parsifal* in Barcelona, and Hagen in *Götterdämmerung* at the Paris Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Sarastro (debut, 2010) and Daland.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is a member of Düsseldorf's Deutsche Oper am Rhein, where he has sung many of his Wagnerian roles, including Gurnemanz, King Heinrich in *Lohengrin*, King

Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*, Hermann in *Tannhäuser*, Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and Fasolt, Fafner, Hunding, and Hagen in the *Ring* cycle. He has also sung Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Daland, and Sarastro at Covent Garden; Fafner and Hagen at the Bayreuth Festival; and King Heinrich at the Baden-Baden Festival and for his debut at La Scala. His repertoire also includes the roles of Zaccharia in *Nabucco*, the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlo*, Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino*, Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*, Rocco in *Fidelio*, Caspar in *Der Freischütz*, and Boris Godunov.



Eric Owens

BASS-BARITONE (PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA)

THIS SEASON Alberich in *Das Rheingold* at the Met, the title role of Handel's *Hercules* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Ramfis in *Aida* with the San Francisco Opera, and Lodovico in *Otello* with Riccardo Muti conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Chicago and at Carnegie Hall.

MET APPEARANCES General Leslie Groves in *Doctor Atomic* (debut, 2008) and Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS General Leslie Groves for the world premiere of *Doctor Atomic* with the San Francisco Opera and subsequent performances with Lyric Opera of Chicago; Orovoso in *Norma* at Covent Garden and with the Opera Company of Philadelphia; and Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* with Washington National Opera. He has also sung Ramfis with the Houston Grand Opera, the Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte* with Paris's Bastille Opera, Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula* in Bordeaux, and Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*, and Colline in *La Bohème* with the Los Angeles Opera.



Franz-Josef Selig

BASS (MAYEN, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Fasolt in *Das Rheingold* at the Met, Rocco in *Fidelio* in Nice, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* at Covent Garden, and Gurnemanz in *Parsifal* with the Vienna State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* (debut, 1998).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Salzburg Festival, Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Barcelona, and King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* in Vienna. He has also sung Hermann in *Tannhäuser* and Gurnemanz in Paris and King Marke on tour in Japan with Paris's Bastille Opera. He appears regularly at Covent Garden, La Scala, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Brussels's La Monnaie, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Paris's Châtelet, and the Salzburg Easter Festival. at Covent Garden, La Scala, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Brussels's La Monnaie, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Paris's Châtelet, and the Salzburg Easter Festival.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



Gerhard Siegel

TENOR (TROSTBERG, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Mime in *Das Rheingold* and the Captain in *Wozzeck* at the Met and Frère Massée in Messiaen's *Saint-François d'Assise* in Madrid.

MET APPEARANCES Mime in *Das Rheingold* (debut, 2004) and *Siegfried*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Herod in *Salome* in Barcelona, Montpellier, at Covent Garden, and the Vienna State Opera, Sellem in *The Rake's Progress* at Vienna's Theater an der Wien, the Marquis/Prince/Manservant in *Lulu* in Madrid, Max in *Der Freischütz* at Berlin's Komische Oper, Florestan in *Fidelio* at the Granada Festival, the title role of *Tannhäuser* in Augsburg, Max in *Jonny Spielt Auf* in Cologne, the title role of *Siegfried* and Stolzing in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in Nürnberg, and Mime at the Bayreuth Festival, Covent Garden, and in Cologne.



Bryn Terfel

BASS-BARITONE (PWLLELI, WALES)

THIS SEASON Wotan in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* at the Met and Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* with the Welsh National Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Scarpia in *Tosca*, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (debut, 1994), Leporello and Don Giovanni in *Don Giovanni*, Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, the Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, the title role of *Falstaff*, and Jochanaan in *Salome*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Scarpia and Wotan at Covent Garden, the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer* at Covent Garden and with the Welsh National Opera, Don Giovanni and Falstaff in Vienna, and the title role of Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* at London's Royal Festival Hall. He has also sung Méphistophélès in *Faust* and the title role of *Gianni Schicchi* at Covent Garden; the Four Villains at Paris's Bastille Opera; Sweeney Todd at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress* with the San Francisco Opera; Figaro at La Scala; Falstaff in Houston, Los Angeles, London, and at the Salzburg Festival; and Jochanaan at the Salzburg Festival and in London, Vienna, and Munich.

ADDITIONAL EX MACHINA PRODUCTION STAFF Costume and Properties Production **Richard Provost**, **Valérie Deschênes**; Wig and make up research **Florence Cornet**; Properties Production **Atelier Sylvain Racine**, **Paul Duval**, **Boscus**, **Théâtre de la Dame de Cœur**, **Créations Fillion**, **Tridim**; Lighting Assistants **Valy Tremblay**, **David Lavallée**; Set Designer Assistants **Anna Tusell Sanchez**, **Santiago Martos Gonzalez**

WORKSHOP PERFORMERS **Anne Barry**, **Geneviève Bérubé**, **Guillaume Chouinard**, **Michael Duffy**, **Andrea Legg**, **Guy Lessard**, **Jacinthe Pauzé Boisvert**, **Jenny Ritchie**, **Francis Roberge**, **Éric Robidoux**, **Martin Vaillancourt**

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Yamaha is the official piano of the Metropolitan Opera.