

GIUSEPPE VERDI

REQUIEM

CONDUCTOR

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

SOPRANO

Leah Hawkins*

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Karen Cargill

TENOR

Matthew Polenzani

BASS

Dmitry Belosselskiy

Metropolitan Opera
Orchestra and Chorus

C. GRAHAM BERWIND, III
CHORUS MASTER

Donald Palumbo

MARIA MANETTI SHREM
GENERAL MANAGER

Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Saturday, September 30, 2023
8:00–9:30PM

Final performance this season

Throughout the 2023–24 season, the Met continues to honor Ukraine and its brave citizens as they fight to defend their country and its cultural heritage.

The Metropolitan Opera

2023-24 SEASON

The 57th Metropolitan Opera performance of
GIUSEPPE VERDI'S

REQUIEM

Requiem and Kyrie (SOLO QUARTET, CHORUS)

Dies irae

Dies irae (CHORUS)

Tuba mirum (CHORUS)

Mors stupebit (BASS)

Liber scriptus (MEZZO-SOPRANO, CHORUS)

Quid sum miser (SOPRANO, MEZZO-SOPRANO, TENOR)

Rex tremendae (SOLO QUARTET, CHORUS)

Recordare (SOPRANO, MEZZO-SOPRANO)

Ingemisco (TENOR)

Confutatis (BASS, CHORUS)

Lacrimosa (SOLO QUARTET, CHORUS)

Offertorium (SOLO QUARTET)

Sanctus (DOUBLE CHORUS)

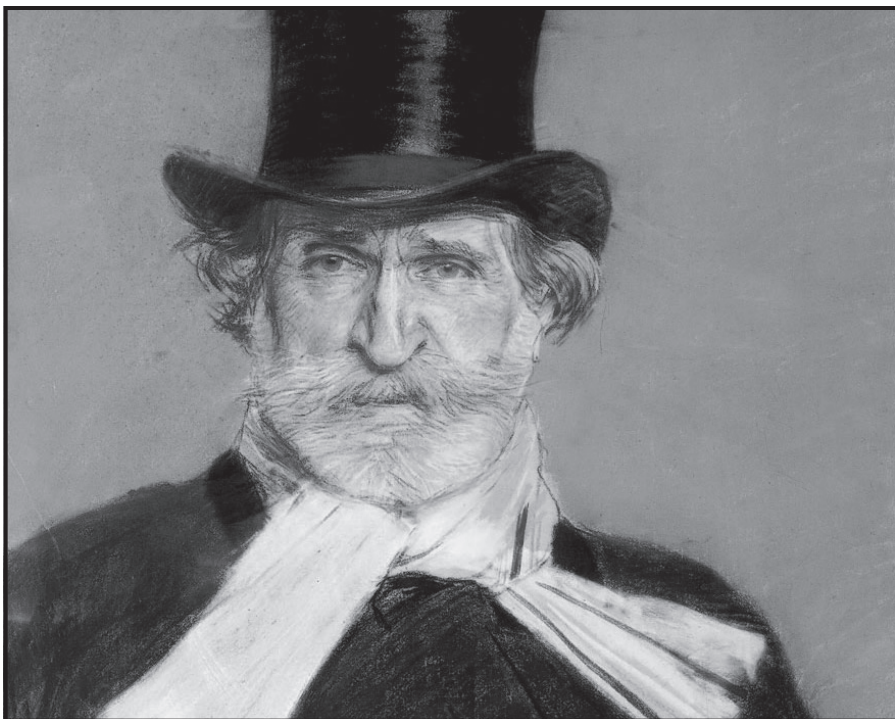
Agnus Dei (SOPRANO, MEZZO-SOPRANO, CHORUS)

Lux aeterna (MEZZO-SOPRANO, TENOR, BASS)

Libera me (SOPRANO, CHORUS)

Tonight's concert will be performed without intermission.

Saturday, September 30, 2023, 8:00-9:30PM



A portrait of
Giuseppe Verdi by
Giovanni Boldini

Musical Preparation **Nimrod David Pfeffer*** and
Bénédicte Jourdois*

Stage Director **Gina Lapinski**

Lighting Design **Aaron Sporer**

Stage Band Conductor **Joseph Lawson**

Met Titles **Michael Panayos**

Hair and makeup executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig
and Makeup Department**

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
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* Graduate of the
Lindemann Young Artist
Development Program

Met Titles

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press the red button once again. If you have questions, please ask an
usher at intermission.

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Giuseppe Verdi

Requiem

Premiere: Chiesa di San Marco, Milan, 1874

The *Messa da Requiem* (Italian for “Requiem Mass”) encapsulates all of Giuseppe Verdi’s dramatic and psychological genius unfettered by the usual constraints of dramaturgy and theatrical practicalities. Never intended for liturgical use, the work is primarily a dramatization-in-concert of the issues at stake in that text: the battle of life against death as it is waged in the individual, the community, and the cosmos. After the death of Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868), Verdi agreed to contribute a section for a grand requiem in honor of the late maestro, but this goal was never realized; however, with the death of author Alessandro Manzoni (1785–1873), a pivotal figure in Italy’s struggle for independence and unification, the *Risorgimento*, the composer decided to craft a complete requiem of his own. The work was born during a period of introspection among the Italian musical community and stands as a requiem not only for an individual at the moment of death but also for the national ideals of the *Risorgimento*, and, by extension, for idealism itself. All of this drama, in the noblest sense of the word, is patent in the music, which ranks among the composer’s best.

The Creator

In a remarkable career spanning six decades in the theater, Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) composed 26 operas, at least half of which are at the core of today’s repertory. In addition to his mastery of the genre, Verdi’s role in Italy’s cultural and political development has made him a national treasure in his native country.

The Text

Verdi’s *Requiem* is a setting of the text for the Roman Catholic Mass for the Dead as it existed from the late Middle Ages to its revision in 1970. Much of the text shares elements with every Catholic Mass, but there are also additions specific to this Mass. The opening, also called “*Requiem*” after its first words—“*Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine*”—only appeared in services for the dead. The final section of Verdi’s work, the “*Libera me*,” is not part of the service itself but a separate prayer recited over the casket after the Mass. Unlike other Catholic liturgies, the *Requiem* includes a long section—from the “*Dies irae*” through the “*Lacrimosa*”—whose source is non-scriptural. Instead, the words come from a dramatic poem attributed to the Franciscan monk Thomas of Celano (ca. 1200–ca. 1265) that vividly evokes the terrors of Hell and fears of Judgment Day.

The Music

The score calls for a large chorus, orchestra, and four soloists. The sensational effects found in Verdi's operas are also in full force here—the thundering drama of the “Dies irae,” repeated at key moments throughout the piece, captures the terror associated with contemplating the end of time. Orchestral commentary on the “action” recalls the sophisticated techniques found in the operas of this mature phase of Verdi's career—from the loud rumble of the trombones at the end of the “Sanctus” to the pictorial use of the oboe, as the text refers to herding sheep, in the beautiful tenor solo “Ingemisco.” Having the chorus available throughout allows for it to participate in many different ways. They respond to the soloists in quiet moments, such as the wrenching “Lacrimosa,” as well as in the monumental “Libera me” finale. Verdi even gives two of the most unforgettable passages of the score entirely to the chorus: the “Dies irae” and the complex “Sanctus” fugue. But the four soloists bear the greatest share of communicating the ideas at stake in the monumental text. This is nowhere more apparent than in the final “Libera me.” The greatest emotional power here derives from the solo soprano part, which climaxes with a run up to a high C that seems to embody the sum total of human fear and aspiration.

Met History

The Requiem first appeared at the Met in 1901, with four performances in Verdi's memory following the composer's death that year. It returned throughout the next few seasons and sporadically after, for a total of nearly 50 performances, including some in tribute to other individuals—President John F. Kennedy in 1964, Met Assistant General Manager Francis Robinson in 1981, and Luciano Pavarotti in 2008. Four performances in the 1950s were given as an alternative to the then-customary Good Friday performances of Wagner's *Parsifal*. Notable conductors who have led the work at the Met include Arturo Toscanini, Walter Damrosch, Tullio Serafin, Bruno Walter, Georg Solti, and James Levine. Among the many memorable soloists who have performed the solo parts are sopranos Zinka Milanov, Leontyne Price, and Renée Fleming; mezzo-sopranos Rosalind Elias, Florence Quivar, and Olga Borodina; tenors Beniamino Gigli, Carlo Bergonzi, and Luciano Pavarotti; and basses Cesare Siepi, James Morris, and René Pape. On September 11, 2021, Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin led a performance of the Requiem to mark the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, featuring soloists Ailyn Pérez, Michelle DeYoung, Matthew Polenzani, and Eric Owens.

Program Note

There is a unifying theme throughout Verdi's works: a profound and sympathetic understanding of individuals struggling within the larger, usually oppressive, society. The Requiem is perhaps the supreme example of this, extending those issues infinitely to explore the individual confronting the cosmos itself. A celebrated but often misunderstood masterpiece, the Requiem and the implications of its magnificent music can only be fully understood within the context of its creation.

The great composer Gioachino Rossini died in 1868. A mere four days after Rossini's death, Verdi wrote to his publisher, Ricordi, to propose a collaboration of living Italian composers, each of whom would contribute one section of a Requiem Mass in honor of the late maestro. The idea of a confraternity of creators from a common motherland acknowledging the death of an august father figure had clear resonance at a pivotal moment in Italian history. In the late 1860s, the Kingdom of Italy existed after decades of toil to unite fractious regions and regain control of those occupied by foreign powers, but its borders were still being fought over, and Rome had not yet been absorbed from the Papacy.

Thirteen composers contributed to this Requiem, including Verdi, who penned the final segment, the "Libera me." (None of the other 12 composers—rightly or wrongly—is remembered today.) Problems arose with conductors, committees, and competing interests, however, and the work was not performed. Verdi was left with an unfinished project and a mass of resentments.

Soon, though, he had the opportunity to reboot the Requiem on his own terms when author Alessandro Manzoni died in 1873 at the age of 88. Manzoni was revered as a figure of the Risorgimento, the Italian movement of dawning national consciousness in the early 19th century, in which the young Verdi had also been an important player. Manzoni's writings, especially his massive novel *I Promessi Sposi* (*The Betrothed*) presented a panorama of Italy and Italians, from the exalted to the common, both positive and negative. Furthermore, his prose was commanding enough to define the modern Italian language for a land long divided by mutually unintelligible dialects. Manzoni's funeral in Milan was a state occasion with tens of thousands of mourners, presaging Verdi's own funeral there 28 years later. Manzoni's death, even more than Rossini's, was a moment for national self-examination.

Much had changed in Italy in the five years between Rossini's and Manzoni's deaths. Rome was finally the national capital, and borders, recognizable today, were set. Yet there was still disappointment. Divisions remained, the economy continued to struggle, and the mass emigrations

to the New World were beginning. If this Requiem were to be a Manzoni Requiem, then it would perform as a Requiem for the Risorgimento, a eulogy for a nation's aspirations sung in the harsh daylight of contemporary political reality.

Verdi had already been working on his 1868 "Libera me" when he told Ricordi that he planned to write a Requiem for Manzoni shortly after visiting the author's grave. He began working on the remainder of the Requiem in earnest in June, finishing it the following April. Milan's Chiesa di San Marco was chosen for the premiere, which Verdi conducted on the first anniversary of Manzoni's death, to great public acclaim. The work was repeated at La Scala three days later, with even louder demonstrations of rapture. Over the next few years, Verdi managed a sort of company that toured the Requiem throughout Europe.

But the reaction was not uniformly ecstatic. The pushback was not against the brilliant music ("which could only have been done by a genius," remarked Johannes Brahms after glancing at the score), but rather that it was insufficiently religious. Eduard Hanslick, Wagner's critical nemesis, said "When a female singer appeals to Jesus, she shouldn't sound as if she were pining for her lover." (Exegetes on the Bible's erotic *Song of Solomon* might disagree.) "Opera in church dress," sniffed conductor Hans von Bülow in an extravagantly piqued denunciation. Such criticisms come close to providing insight but miss the point: Only when we consider this supposed "flaw" of the Requiem—its dramatic nature—can we understand its full greatness.

Listeners are rewarded for paying as much attention to the text of the Requiem as to that of the composer's greatest operas—more, even. Verdi did exactly that, and he assumed his audience had an intimate familiarity with these words, memorized and permeating the subconscious. The modern listener needs to work harder, as the words (and the Latin language itself) are not a part of our lives as they were to Italians of 150 years ago.

The traditional Requiem Mass is a service in the Roman Catholic Church, usually given at funerals. It differs from the standard Mass form in important ways, most importantly in that, while almost all the words of the typical Catholic Mass are taken from the Bible, the Requiem Mass has addenda—most notably the "Dies irae" ("Day of Wrath"), a vivid poem about Judgment Day attributed to the 13th-century Franciscan brother Thomas of Celano, and the "Libera me," another separate poem meant as a prayer after the funeral itself. The subject—that is, the person(s) speaking—changes throughout the Requiem. In the first movement, the subjects are mourners asking God for eternal rest for the

deceased. In the long “Dies irae,” the perspective shifts to the first-person, one considering his own death. The “Sanctus” text captures Judgment Day from the angelic point of view, an experience quite different from that of us poor mortals. And in the final “Libera me,” the perspective returns to the first-person, with a subject who is very, very terrified by death. It is not frivolous to insist on these words as role-playing in the drama of life against death. Even the hardly frivolous *Catholic Encyclopedia* of 1913 says that the changes in subject in the Requiem Mass should be understood as “dramatic substitutions.” In other words, the Requiem Mass is dramatic, and a drama that is sung is an opera. Both opera and the Catholic Church are essentially Italian creations, and Verdi’s Requiem can be understood as an opera, set in a traditional Catholic matrix, about the death of the idea of Italy and all other human aspirations.

When one considers the text as dialogue, the full Verdian humanity of the music leaps out. Once one realizes that the “Sanctus” is sung from the point of view of angels and saints, already blessed, the section’s fugal symmetry, like a cathedral’s rose window, makes perfect sense. Compare that to the fugue in the “Libera me,” which is jagged, irregular, and written with as many accidentals as can be found in many a modern score—a fugue like the “Sanctus,” but distorted by the terror of someone whose eternal life still hangs in the balance. The “Sanctus” is what religion tells us we should feel in that moment; the “Libera me” is what Verdi tells us we would actually feel.

This arresting final section recalls Verdi’s writing in *Otello*, premiered 13 years after the Requiem. The first five minutes of Verdi’s final tragedy—the famous storm scene—presents people in a similar situation as those in the “Libera me.” They face both personal and universal annihilation, and they turn on their Creator with something that sounds like anger, demanding salvation. In that moment, Verdi uses a pattern of six repeated notes, double triplets, at the mention of God, as in the “Tuba mirum” of the Requiem. He uses the same figure in Act III of *Otello* for the Venetian emissary. It appears to stand for patriarchal authority—or, rather, to the human understanding of that authority, which is what interested the humanist Verdi more than the deity Itself. This preference explains the prominence of the soprano soloist throughout the “Libera me” and especially her final ascent to a high C that soars above the fortissimo chorus. Now, think of the Triumphant Scene in *Aida*. Verdi does not take sides between the nations at war—he lets the soprano voice slice through that chorus to show us how the individual’s plight in this complex situation is more poignant to him than the war itself. In the Requiem, Verdi the humanist (if not agnostic or even outright atheist) does something analogous. He does not tell us what God

Program Note CONTINUED

will do when humans beg for salvation (unlike some other Requiems that include the “In Paradisum” prayer and other promises of ultimate consolation) or even if God exists. He tells us that the plight of the human who contemplates death is worthy of pathos and respect. *Aida*, *Otello*, and the Requiem all say the same thing: Nations may form and rage and dissolve, and higher powers may save us or will our destruction, but what we should concern ourselves with are human individuals and their plights.

—William Berger

William Berger, a Met staff writer, radio producer, and commentator, is the author of books including Verdi with a Vengeance and Wagner Without Fear.

Bravo, Maestro!

The Met recently announced that its esteemed Chorus Master, Donald Palumbo, will step down with the close of the 2023–24 season. Maestro Palumbo joined the Met in 2006 and, in the 17 years since, has elevated the ensemble’s musicmaking to new heights, preparing them for nearly 25 productions each season. As a testament to his achievement, the Met Chorus was also named Best Chorus at the 2021 International Opera Awards. And while he will conclude his full-time duties in the spring, Palumbo still plans to return in future seasons to work on select operas.

In honor of Palumbo’s illustrious Met career, Board Vice President and Chairman of the Executive Committee C. Graham Berwind, III has made a generous donation to name the Chorus Master position, which will now be known as the C. Graham Berwind, III Chorus Master. “Donald’s contribution to the Met has been truly extraordinary,” says Berwind. “His musical leadership and dedication has resulted in the world-class opera chorus we are privileged to hear night after night. I am delighted to honor him as he embarks on his last season as Chorus Master.”



NEW PERSPECTIVE

The Met premiere of Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* marks not only the start of the 2023–24 Met season but also the launch of the Neubauer Family Foundation New Works Initiative, a crucial funding effort in support of the Met's plan to bring 15 to 20 new operas to its stage over the next five seasons. It's just the latest contribution by Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer and Joseph Neubauer, who have underwritten some of the company's most consequential projects of the last 20 years, including the *Live in HD* cinema transmissions, Yannick Nézet-Séguin's musical leadership of the company, and the introduction of Sunday matinee performances.

For Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer, Opening Night of the 2021–22 season epitomized what the Met can and should be. That evening, she says, as Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* had its Met premiere, she looked around and saw the auditorium filled by an audience that looked more like New York than any she'd ever experienced: more




Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer
and Joseph Neubauer

young people, more people of color, and many people, from all walks of life, who had never set foot in the Met before. What's more, everyone was engaged and looking to actively participate. "People had such a good time," she says, "and I saw so many spontaneous conversations erupt among strangers."

Of course, there were many ingredients to that magical occasion. "We had all come through a very hard time with the isolation of Covid, an explosion of anxiety and depression, relentless political strife—there was no comfort anywhere," Lerman-Neubauer says. "*Fire* was the first time we got back into the opera house, and it was like the epiphany at the end of a tragedy. It showed us that life was going to continue, that culture was going to continue." *Fire* also marked the first opera by a Black composer to be presented by the Met, and it told a captivating and immediately resonant modern story. Both of those facts undeniably added to the palpable impression of artistic rebirth and to the diversity of the audience. "It all created the feeling that opera could be even better than before," Lerman-Neubauer says.

When the Neubauers made their generous gift in support of the Met's efforts to nurture and present new operas, it was to ensure that there are many more nights at the Met just as inspirational, just as cathartic, and just as communal as the premiere of *Fire* was. "In opera, you squeeze into a few hours an emotional arc that is the lived experience of months if not years," Lerman-Neubauer says—an emotional journey that is shared, in real time, by the entire audience. That shared experience, she emphasizes, can be enriched by new repertoire that is free from old habits, and by new audience members who bring different perspectives with them. And the payoff of this broadening of vision is not restricted to new work; it also reveals new depth when revisiting familiar repertoire afterward. "So the message is not about how great new opera is or isn't, or how great old opera is or isn't," she says. "But these new works are an impetus to think about things in a different way, and can be the catalyst for new relationships among thinking people who are engaged with the issues of our time, issues that are being explored artistically on the Met stage."

It's that exchange of ideas and the resulting revelations that Lerman-Neubauer sees as the ultimate goal of the New Works Initiative. "The magic of the Met attracts smart and interesting people, and my greatest hope is that they will turn to someone they didn't know before the performance and talk about the things that moved them," she says. "Opera still serves to reveal the human spirit and the human psyche—under duress, when impassioned, when inspired. Telling these stories helps individuals resolve these kinds of issues in their own lives and build a healthier society." 

ALSO ON STAGE



PAOLA KUDACKI/MET OPERA

JAKE HEGGIE / LIBRETTO BY TERENCE McNALLY

DEAD MAN WALKING

METROPOLITAN OPERA PREMIERE

Jake Heggie's soul-stirring adaptation of Sister Helen Prejean's memoir about her ministry on death row has its company premiere, starring mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato and bass-baritone Ryan McKinny. Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducts a haunting new production by director Ivo van Hove.

SEP 26, 30mat **OCT** 3, 6, 8mat, 12, 15mat, 18, 21mat

Tickets from \$25 | metopera.org

The Cast



Yannick Nézet-Séguin

CONDUCTOR (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON Verdi's *Requiem*, Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, *Florença en el Amazonas*, *La Forza del Destino*, and *Roméo et Juliette* at the Met; *Die Walküre* in concert with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra; and concerts with the Met Orchestra, Met Orchestra Chamber Ensemble, Orchestre Métropolitain, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America, and Berlin Philharmonic.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 2009 debut leading *Carmen*, he has conducted 20 operas, including *La Bohème*, Terence Blanchard's *Champion* and *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, *Lohengrin*, Kevin Puts's *The Hours*, *Don Carlos*, and Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is in his fifth season as the Met's Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer Music Director. He has served as music director of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 2012 and artistic director and principal conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. In 2018, he became honorary conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, where he was music director for ten seasons, and in 2016, he was named an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. Between 2008 and 2014, he was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He has won three Grammy Awards.



Karen Cargill

MEZZO-SOPRANO (ARBROATH, SCOTLAND)

THIS SEASON Verdi's *Requiem* at the Met and with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and London's Philharmonia, Fricka in *Die Walküre* in concert with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Judit in *Bluebeard's Castle* in concert with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and concert appearances with leading orchestras in the United States and Europe.

MET APPEARANCES Erda in the *Ring* cycle, Mother Marie in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Magdalene in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung* (debut, 2012), and Anna in *Les Troyens*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS On the operatic stage, recent performances include Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde* and Mother Marie at the Glyndebourne Festival, the Princess in *Suor Angelica* at Welsh National Opera, Marguerite in *La Damnation de Faust* in concert with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and Fricka in *Das Rheingold* in concert with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra. She has also appeared in concert with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, and Cleveland Orchestra, among others.

ALSO ON STAGE



MARTY SOHL/MET OPERA

GIUSEPPE VERDI

NABUCCO

Verdi's fiery biblical drama returns in Elijah Moshinsky's epic staging, conducted by Daniele Callegari. Baritone George Gagnidze stars in the title role, alongside soprano Liudmyla Monastyrska as the bloodthirsty Abigaille and tenor SeokJong Baek and mezzo-soprano Maria Barakova as the lovers Ismaele and Fenena.

SEP 28 OCT 1 mat, 4, 7 mat, 11, 14

Tickets from \$25 | [metopera.org](https://www.metopera.org)



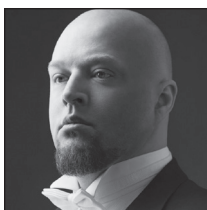
Leah Hawkins

SOPRANO (PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA)

THIS SEASON Verdi's Requiem and Louise/Betty in Anthony Davis's *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* at the Met, Louise/Betty at Seattle Opera, Giorgetta in *Il Tabarro* at Dutch National Opera, and a concert at Opera Roanoke.

MET APPEARANCES Musetta in *La Bohème*, Strawberry Woman in *Porgy and Bess*, Masha in *The Queen of Spades*, the Priestess in *Aida*, and an Alms Collector in *Suor Angelica* (debut, 2018).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the title role of *Tosca* at the Santa Fe Opera and Opera Memphis, the title role of *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Arizona Opera, the Foreign Princess in *Rusalka* at Pittsburgh Opera, Serena in *Porgy and Bess* at Des Moines Metro Opera, and Desdemona in the world premiere of Marina Abramović's *7 Death of Maria Callas* at the Bavarian State Opera and at the Paris Opera. She has also sung Mrs. Johannes Zegner in the world premiere of Missy Mazzoli's *Proving Up*, the I-Will-Sell-My-Children Mom in the world premiere of Mohammed Fairouz's *The Dictator's Wife*, and Cousin Blanche / Sadie Donastorg Griffith in Terence Blanchard's *Champion* at Washington National Opera. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Dmitry Belosselskiy

BASS (PAVLOHRAD, UKRAINE)

THIS SEASON Verdi's Requiem and Zaccaria in *Nabucco* at the Met, Filippo II in *Don Carlo* at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, Verdi's Requiem with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande and Orquesta Sinfónica de Barcelona y de Cataluña, and King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* in Palermo.

MET APPEARANCES Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, Fafner in the *Ring* cycle, the Old Hebrew in *Samson et Dalila*, Ramfis in *Aida*, Wurm in *Luisa Miller*, Zaccaria (debut, 2011), de Silva in *Ernani*, and the Old Convict in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is a guest soloist at the Bolshoi Theatre, where, between 2010 and 2013, he was a soloist. At the Bolshoi, his roles have included King Heinrich in *Lohengrin*, the title role of *Boris Godunov*, Méphistophélès in *La Damnation de Faust*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Zaccaria, King René in *Iolanta*, and Malyuta Skuratov in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride*. He has also appeared at the Bayreuth Festival, Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Paris Opera, Dutch National Opera, Salzburg Festival, La Scala, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and in Madrid, Turin, Rome, Verona, Barcelona, Bologna, Florence, Frankfurt, and Orange, among others.



Matthew Polenzani

TENOR (EVANSTON, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON Verdi's Requiem, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* at the Met; Tito in *La Clemenza di Tito* at the Vienna State Opera; Orombello in Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* in concert in Naples; Florestan in *Fidelio* in Hamburg; Handel's *Messiah* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; Giasone in *Medea* at the Canadian Opera Company; the title role of *Werther* in concert at the Klangvokal Musikfestival Dortmund; and Pinkerton in Madrid.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 1997 debut as Boyar Khrushchov in *Boris Godunov*, he has sung more than 400 performances of 43 roles, including Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Giasone, Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, the Italian Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Rodolfo, Macduff in *Macbeth*, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, Tito, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and the title roles of *Don Carlos*, *Idomeneo*, and *Roberto Devereux*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has appeared at many of the world's greatest opera houses, including the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Paris Opera, Bavarian State Opera, La Scala, Covent Garden, Salzburg Festival, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago, among others. He was the 2008 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman.