

GIUSEPPE VERDI

UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

CONDUCTOR
Carlo Rizzi

PRODUCTION
David Alden

SET DESIGNER
Paul Steinberg

COSTUME DESIGNER
Brigitte Reiffenstuel

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Adam Silverman

CHOREOGRAPHER
Maxine Braham

MARIA MANETTI SHREM
GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in three acts

Libretto by Antonio Somma, based
on Eugène Scribe's libretto for
Daniel-François-Esprit Auber's opera
Gustave III, ou Le Bal Masqué

Tuesday, October 31, 2023
8:00–11:20PM

The production of *Un Ballo in Maschera* was
made possible by a generous gift from the
**Betsy and Edward Cohen / Areté Foundation
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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 306th Metropolitan Opera performance of
GIUSEPPE VERDI'S

UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

CONDUCTOR
Carlo Rizzi

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

COUNT RIBBING
Kevin Short

CRISTIANO
Jeongcheol Cha

COUNT HORN
Christopher Job

AMELIA'S SERVANT
Tony Stevenson*

OSCAR
Liv Redpath

AMELIA
Angela Meade

GUSTAVO III
Charles Castronovo*

COUNT ANCKARSTRÖM
Quinn Kelsey

JUDGE
Thomas Capobianco

MADAME ULRICA ARVIDSSON
Olesya Petrova

Tuesday, October 31, 2023, 8:00-11:20PM



A scene from Verdi's
Un Ballo in Maschera

C. Graham Berwind, III Chorus Master Donald Palumbo
Musical Preparation Derrick Inouye, Joshua Greene,
Joseph Lawson, and Jonathan C. Kelly
Assistant Stage Directors Eric Sean Fogel, Jonathon Loy, and
J. Knighten Smit

Assistant to the Set Designer Michael V. Moore
Assistants to the Costume Designer Irene Bohan and
Carolyn Hoffmann

Fight Director Chris Dumont
Stage Band Conductor Joseph Lawson
Italian Diction Coach Hemdi Kfir

Prompter Joshua Greene
Met Titles Cori Ellison

Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and
painted by Metropolitan Opera Shops

Costumes executed by Metropolitan Opera Costume
Department; Andrew Capetanos, London; Classic Cuts,
London; Das Gewand, Düsseldorf, Germany; Marian Jean
Hose, New York; Seams Unlimited, Racine, Wisconsin; and
Joe Scafati, New York

Wigs and makeup constructed and 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.

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* Graduate of the
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Met Titles

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press the red button once again. If you have questions please ask an
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Synopsis

Act I

Stockholm, Sweden. Courtiers await an audience with King Gustavo III, including a group of conspirators led by Counts Horn and Ribbing. The king enters. He notices the name of Amelia, wife of his secretary and friend, Count Anckarström, on the guest list for a masked ball and thinks about his secret love for her. Left alone with Gustavo, Anckarström warns the king of a conspiracy against him, but Gustavo ignores the threat. The young page Oscar tells the king about the fortune teller Madame Ulrica Arvidsson, who has been accused of witchcraft and is to be banished. Deciding to see for himself, the king arranges for his court to pay her an incognito visit.

In a building by the port, Madame Arvidsson invokes prophetic spirits and tells the sailor Cristiano that he will soon become wealthy and receive a promotion. The king, who has arrived in disguise, slips money and papers into Cristiano's pockets. When the sailor discovers his good fortune, everybody praises Madame Arvidsson's abilities. Gustavo hides as she sends her visitors away to admit Amelia, who is tormented by her love for the king and asks for help. Madame Arvidsson tells her that she must gather a magic herb after dark. When Amelia leaves, Gustavo decides to follow her that night. Oscar and members of the court enter, and the king asks Madame Arvidsson to read his palm. She tells him that he will die by the hand of a friend. Gustavo laughs at the prophecy and demands to know the name of the assassin. Madame Arvidsson replies that it will be the first person that shakes his hand. When Anckarström rushes in, Gustavo clasps his hand saying that the oracle has been disproved since Anckarström is his most loyal friend. Recognizing their king, the crowd cheers him as the conspirators grumble their discontent.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 8:55PM)

Act II

That night in an abandoned warehouse, Amelia, who has followed Madame Arvidsson's advice to find the herb, expresses her hope that she will be freed of her love for the king. When Gustavo appears, she asks him to leave, but ultimately they admit their love for each other. Amelia hides her face when Anckarström suddenly appears, warning the king that assassins are nearby. Gustavo makes Anckarström promise to escort the woman back to the city without lifting her veil, then escapes. Finding Anckarström instead of their intended victim, the conspirators make ironic remarks about his veiled companion. When Amelia realizes that her husband will fight rather than break his promise to Gustavo, she drops her veil to save him. The conspirators are amused and ridicule Anckarström for his embarrassing situation.

Anckarström, shocked by the king's betrayal and his wife's seeming infidelity, asks Horn and Ribbing to come to his house the next morning.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:55PM)

Act III

In his apartment, Anckarström threatens to kill Amelia. She asks to see their young son before she dies. After she has left, Anckarström declares that it is the king, not Amelia, upon whom he should seek vengeance. Horn and Ribbing arrive, and Anckarström tells them that he will join the conspirators. The men decide to draw lots to determine who will kill the king, and Anckarström forces his wife to choose from the slips of paper. When his own name comes up, he is overjoyed. Oscar enters, bringing an invitation to the masked ball. As the assassins welcome this chance to execute their plan, Amelia decides to warn the king.

Gustavo, alone in his study, resolves to renounce his love and to send Amelia and Anckarström to Finland. Oscar brings an anonymous letter warning him of the murder plot, but the king refuses to be intimidated and leaves for the masquerade.

In the ballroom, Anckarström tries to learn from Oscar what costume the king is wearing. The page answers evasively but finally reveals Gustavo's disguise. Amelia and the king meet, and she repeats her warning. Refusing to leave, he declares his love one more time and tells her that he is sending her away with her husband. As the lovers say goodbye, Anckarström stabs the king. The dying Gustavo forgives his murderer and admits that he loved Amelia but assures Anckarström that his wife is innocent. The crowd praises the king's goodness and generosity.

Giuseppe Verdi

Un Ballo in Maschera

Premiere: Teatro Apollo, Rome, 1859

Un Ballo in Maschera, one of Verdi's mature operas written between the "trilogy" of *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, and *Il Trovatore* and his final works, is a superb drama about the fatal intersection of love and politics. The central story element is plain and direct. A king is in love with his best friend's wife. The husband suspects that his wife has been unfaithful, and he decides to kill the king at a masked ball. The story came from history—Sweden's King Gustav III met his death at the hands of a political enemy during a masked ball at the Stockholm Opera House in 1792. French dramatist Eugène Scribe (who also provided the libretto to Verdi's *Les Vêpres Siciliennes*) had written the first operatic version of this historical event for composer François Auber, whose work, *Gustave III*, had been given in Paris in 1833. Scribe's version added the twist of a love triangle, and despite his poetic license with the facts, a number of curious details from the historical story made their way into the libretto: a medium named Ulrica Arvidsson (or Arfvidsson) warned the king about an assassination; he received an anonymous note alerting him of a plot on his life; and the conspirators identified the king by a pink ribbon on the cape of his costume.

The Creators

Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) created 26 operas in a remarkable career spanning six decades in the theater. His role in Italy's cultural and political development has made him an icon in his native country. Antonio Somma (1809–64) was a lawyer, playwright, and theater manager. Verdi did not write another opera with him, although he kept Somma busy working on a libretto based on *King Lear*, a project that was never completed.

The Setting

This opera suffered from the interference of censors of the Kingdom of Naples, who objected to the depiction of a royal assassination on the stage. Somma offered a revised libretto, moving the action to colonial Boston. When the censors demanded still more changes, Verdi abandoned his contract with the theater and took the piece to Rome (just ahead of the police and a lawsuit), where he managed to have the opera produced with Somma's revisions. The Boston setting, despite its odd incongruities, became the opera's standard version well into the second half of the 20th century. In recent years, the original Swedish setting has often been restored, as in the previous and the current Met productions.

The Music

The score of *Ballo* is remarkable for its economy and beautiful melodic expression. In addition to supporting the singers, the orchestra adds its own commentary: The repeating chords in the ballroom scene that ends the opera are a masterpiece of tension mounting beneath an elegant veneer. All of the leading roles have solos that are some of Verdi's best. Among them are the soprano's haunting "Morrò, ma prima in grazia" in the first scene of Act III, followed by the great baritone aria "Eri tu." The tenor has several spotlight solos, ranging in tone from the deliberately showy "Di' tu, se fedele" in Act I to the introspection of the extended study scene in Act III. This opera also features two voice types infrequently used by Verdi, a contralto for the fortune teller Madame Arvidsson and a coloratura soprano as the page Oscar (in what is also unusual for Verdi, a trouser role). Some of the most remarkable passages of the score, however, are given to multiple voices: the love duet in Act II is perhaps Verdi's most overtly passionate; the Act I ensemble "È scherzo od è follia" is built on contrasting layers of eeriness, fear, and nonchalance. The unforgettable, subdued laughing chorus at the end of Act II drips with sneering disdain. Act III's ingenious opening scene builds from a solo narrative to a quintet in which the various emotions of the protagonists—guilt, revenge, and giddy anticipation of the upcoming masked ball—merge into a single extraordinary stream of music.

Met History

The opera was first heard at the Met in 1889, sung in German and starring Lilli Lehmann. Arturo Toscanini conducted a new production in 1913 with the unbeatable trio of Emmy Destinn, Enrico Caruso, and Pasquale Amato. Another production was unveiled on opening night 1940, featuring Zinka Milanov (who performed the role of Amelia 30 times through 1956) and Jussi Björling. Marian Anderson sang Ulrica eight times in 1955 and 1956, effectively ending the color barrier for Black singers at the Met. A new production in 1962 marked the company debut of Nello Santi, conducting Leonie Rysanek, Carlo Bergonzi (33 performances as Riccardo/Gustavo through 1983), and Robert Merrill (56 performances as Renato/Anckarström from 1955 to 1976). In 1980, Giuseppe Patanè conducted a new staging by Elijah Moshinsky, with Katia Ricciarelli, Luciano Pavarotti (31 performances as Riccardo/Gustavo through 1997), and Louis Quilico in the leading roles. Pavarotti also starred in the 1990 premiere of Piero Faggioni's production, opposite Aprile Millo, Elena Obraztsova, and Juan Pons, with James Levine on the podium. Other notable appearances over the past decades include sopranos Martina Arroyo, Montserrat Caballé, Leontyne Price, and Deborah Voigt; mezzo-soprano Florence Quivar; tenors Jan Peerce, Richard Tucker, and Plácido Domingo; and baritones Sherrill Milnes and Leo Nucci. David Alden's production, conducted by Fabio Luisi, opened in November 2012, with Sondra Radvanovsky, Dolora Zajick, Marcelo Álvarez, and Dmitri Hvorostovsky leading the cast.

Program Note

What Verdi *really* wanted to compose for the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples when negotiations began for a new opera in 1857 was *King Lear*, and Verdi fans have been lamenting its loss ever since. But what a masterpiece we got in its stead—after a truly torturous genesis. When the singer that Verdi had wanted for Cordelia in *Lear* was not available, he told the theater manager Vincenzo Torelli that he and his librettist Antonio Somma were “scaling down” a French libretto by Eugène Scribe, a text originally set to music by Daniel-François-Esprit Auber in 1833 as *Gustave III; ou, Le Bal Masqué* and by Saverio Mercadante as *Il Reggente* in 1843. A plot already known to the opera world, with “conventional things in it like all operas,” as Verdi described it, thus took the place of the planned Shakespeare tragedy. But despite his somewhat dismissive assessment of Scribe, Verdi unleashed his full harmonic, tonal, formal, melodic, and orchestral resources to create something far beyond the conventional.

The subject was taken from recent history and converted into operatic fiction, from which one learns larger human truths rather than accurate historical details. The assassination of a king *did* happen, in real life as in opera, but not for the same reasons, and it was a plot point guaranteed to curl the censors’ hair, if not set it on fire. The historical Gustav III (who was gay—one of the points on which the opera differs with reality) inaugurated the Gustavian Enlightenment in Sweden on assuming the throne in 1771; he banned torture, granted freedom of the press and religious tolerance, promoted free trade, and angered the nobility in his parliament. A captain named Jacob Johan Anckarström shot Gustav during a masked ball at the Stockholm Opera House in March 1792, refusing to say before his execution why he had done it or with whose aid. Scribe reframed the murder as a love-tragedy, with betrayal of friendship thrown in for good measure; in his script, Gustav’s loyal secretary Anckarström is married to Amelia, in love with Gustav and he with her; at the start of the opera, neither has confessed or acted on their love. A soothsayer named Ulrica predicts Gustav’s murder by the next man to take his hand, but the heedless Gustav refuses to consider the danger; we first meet him in his frivolous, elegant, lighthearted “public” persona, which deepens and darkens when he thinks of Amelia. His Ariel-like court page Oscar (also not historical) is an irrepressibly merry creature, sung by a coloratura soprano—the only “pants role” in all of Verdi. He is Gustav’s alter ego, his music replete with grace notes, trills, and melodic leaping about, and, like Mozart’s Cherubino, he has a talent for appearing when not wanted. Contrasting darkness is supplied by the witch Ulrica, the bumbling conspirators Count Ribbing and Count Horn, and the guilt-ridden Amelia, her music mostly devoid of frilly ornament and spanning a huge range—the register of her emotional depth. Irony is piled upon irony, and coups de théâtre abound, with everyone masked at least once.

Predictably, the Neapolitan censors required all sorts of changes: The tenor changed from king to duke, Sweden became the 12th-century Viking North, firearms were removed, the hero's love needed to be both noble and remorseful, etc. Verdi therefore changed the setting to Pomerania, made the duke properly penitent, had him killed with a dagger, and changed the title to *Una Vendetta in Domino*. But shortly before rehearsals were to begin in 1858, Felice Orsini attempted to assassinate Napoléon III, and in this newly charged political climate, the censors demanded further changes that Verdi was not willing to make. When management proposed that an unnamed person remake the libretto as *Adelia degli Armandi*, located in 14th-century Florence, Verdi was incensed: "What, you've already written the piece? What does that matter? Lengthen, shorten, cut around, it will be all right!" After a threatened lawsuit, the parties settled amicably on a replacement performance of *Simon Boccanegra*, and the composer took his *Vendetta in Domino* to Rome, hoping for better luck with the Vatican censors—to no avail. In a drastic move, Verdi relocated the opera to colonial Boston, with the assassinated protagonist becoming governor of Boston (a non-existent position) and his secretary Renato a "Creole." (What Verdi understood by that designation is a mystery.) Tonight's production uses the original Swedish names, combined with a timeless setting that borrows from film noir and is dominated by a gigantic ceiling painting of Icarus—Greek mythology's poster child for reckless disregard of mortal danger—falling from the sky.

We think of Verdi as a tragedian, but this work deliberately juxtaposes buffo comedy with darker, intensely dramatic veins of music. The physical passion that flares between a married woman and a monarch takes center stage: Where history, religion, political conflicts, wars, etc. are not just backdrop but major subject matter in many Verdi operas (*Nabucco*, *Macbeth*, *Don Carlo*, *Aida*, *Giovanna d'Arco*, and more), this one is entirely about the current of feeling between two people. It is not coincidental that the Act II, Scene 2 duet in which Gustav persuades Amelia to sing "I love you" is at the exact center of the opera and is a unique formal construction, beginning with the quotation in the orchestral introduction of Amelia's prayer "Consentimi, O Signore" from Act I, Scene 2 in Ulrica's cave; the high, arch-shaped melody seems a foreshadowing of Desdemona's vocal line in the Act III finale of *Otello* some three decades later. That is not the only hint of the monumental Shakespeare opera to come: When Anckarström clasps Gustav's hand in Ulrica's cave after she has prophesied his death, Gustav's "Si: perchè la man che stringo" might remind many of Otello's entrance, "Esultate!," in its similar mixture of triumph and joy.

It is not surprising that the atmosphere of this work involves injections of minor-mode darkness into major-mode brightness and is saturated with chromatic scales, both ascending (tension-filled) and descending

(sorrowful/menacing/death-haunted/ghostly). Verdi leaves open the question of whether Ulrica is a shrewd fraud who can decode the psychological signals cast by other people or is truly an emissary of Hell; her ominous music is characterized by the tritone intervals that medieval musicians called “the devil in music” and by figures that crawl within a limited chromatic space in menacing manner. Horn and Ribbing are first introduced in fugato, with one voice “chasing” another as an apt musical analogy for villains of like mind. The frantic D-minor trio, “Fuggi, fuggi: per l’orrida via” (Act II, Scene 2) in which the disguised Amelia, Gustav, and Anckarström are all desperate to escape, sounds to the Verdi scholar Julian Budden like “an infernal hunt, all frenzied motion in a key long associated with death” (think Mozart’s Requiem), but it culminates in the hushed, unaccompanied “sighing figure” to which the stricken Anckarström breathes the name “Amelia.” The subsequent juxtaposition of their distress with the conspirators’ laughter—a chilling use of a comic-opera tradition—is among the starkest contrasts in an opera filled with them. “Tragedy has turned into comedy,” the conspirators sing ... but tragedy reasserts itself soon enough. It never left.

Verdi knew, as did Shakespeare, that sexual jealousy is the most degrading of all human emotions; in our supposedly enlightened times, we forget that murdering a woman suspected of infidelity was often tolerated by law. In the final act, the three principals sing justly famous arias of profound feeling, beginning with Amelia’s “Morrò, ma prima in grazia,” in dark-darker-darkest minor keys. Both men are given romanzas (slower arias that start in minor and end in major, often especially tender and reflective): Anckarström’s “Eri tu” contrasts a doom-laden initial passage with a lyrical remembrance of bygone sweetness, while Gustav’s “Ma se



Un Ballo in Maschera on Demand

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m'è forza perdeti" at the start of Act III, Scene 2 features two heartrending shifts of tonality, the second one marked *pppp* (as soft as humanly possible). Rocks would weep on hearing it. In a final irony, the assassination scene is accompanied by a lilting mazurka, ending when Anckarström strikes the death blow. Gustav's pardon of one and all is expressed in music of melting sweetness, followed by a brief, violent storm of horror—the last of the deliberately unresolved contrasts in this opera.

Mozart's great *Don Giovanni* also mixed light and dark, buffo music with hellfire and damnation; in it, too, disguises are everywhere, and irony rules. But none of Mozart's characters know the transcendent love that Amelia and Gustav confess to one another in Act II, even if they are denied any possibility of physical union. We are right both to envy them and weep for them.

—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.

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

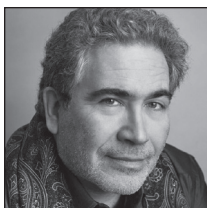
young people, more people of color, and many people, from all walks of life, who had never set foot in the Met before. What's more, everyone was engaged and looking to actively participate. "People had such a good time," she says, "and I saw so many spontaneous conversations erupt among strangers."

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." 

The Cast



Carlo Rizzi

CONDUCTOR (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *La Bohème* at the Met, *I Vespri Siciliani* at the Vienna State Opera, *Otello* in Seoul, *Il Trittico* at Welsh National Opera, and a gala with Opera Rara.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 1993 debut leading *La Bohème*, he has conducted more than 250 performances of 18 operas, including *Don Carlo*, *Tosca*, *Medea*, *Mefistofele*, *Turandot*, *Norma*, *La Traviata*, *Nabucco*, *Il Trovatore*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Aida*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Rigoletto*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS In 2019, he became music director of Opera Rara, and since 2015, he has served as conductor laureate of Welsh National Opera, where he held two tenures as music director, 1992–2001 and 2004–08. Since launching his conducting career in 1982 with Donizetti's *L'Ajo nell'Imbarazzo*, he has led more than 100 different operas, a repertoire rich in both Italian works and the music of Wagner, Strauss, Britten, and Janáček. He has also conducted performances at the Bavarian State Opera, Paris Opera, La Scala, Covent Garden, Dutch National Opera, Norwegian National Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Pesaro's Rossini Opera Festival, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Deutsche Oper Berlin, among others.



Angela Meade

SOPRANO (CENTRALIA, WASHINGTON)

THIS SEASON *Amelia* in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Met, the title role of Rossini's *Ermione* with Washington Concert Opera, Chrysothemis in *Elektra* at the Dallas Opera, the title role of Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* in Genoa, Verdi's *Requiem* in Venice, and the title role of *Turandot* at LA Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Elisabetta di Valois in *Don Carlo*, Margherita in *Mefistofele*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Leonora in *Il Trovatore*, Elvira in *Ernani* (debut, 2008), Alice Ford in *Falstaff*, the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and the title roles of *Aida*, *Norma*, *Semiramide*, and *Anna Bolena*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include *Elvira* in Valencia, Venice, and Rome; *Lucrezia Contarini* in *I Due Foscari* and *Anna Bolena* in Genoa; *Aida* in Turin; *Elena* in *I Vespri Siciliani* at La Scala; the title role of *Lucrezia Borgia* at the Bavarian State Opera; *Leonora* in *La Forza del Destino* in concert in A Coruña; *Amelia* in concert at the Verbier Festival; *Amelia Grimaldi* in *Simon Boccanegra* and *Norma* in Parma; and *Sieglinde* in *Die Walküre* in concert at Seattle Opera. She was the 2012 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman.



Olesya Petrova

MEZZO-SOPRANO (ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA)

THIS SEASON Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Met, Verdi's Requiem with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Tenerife, Marguerite in *La Damnation de Faust* in concert with the RTVE Symphony Orchestra, Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with the NHK Symphony Orchestra, and Ježibaba in *Rusalka* in Liège.

MET APPEARANCES Amneris in *Aida*, Federica in *Luisa Miller*, Antonia's Mother in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and Madelon in *Andrea Chénier* (debut, 2014).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Since 2016, she has been a soloist at St. Petersburg's Mikhailovsky Theatre, where her roles have included Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Amneris, Ulrica, and the Countess in *The Queen of Spades*, among others. Between 2007 and 2016, she was a soloist with the Opera and Ballet Theatre of the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Recent performances also include Azucena in *Il Trovatore* in Buenos Aires, Monaco, Rovigo, and in concert with New Zealand Opera; Amneris in Verona and at Covent Garden; Lyubasha in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride* and Amneris in Novosibirsk; Mother Superior in Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel* in Madrid; Ulrica at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and in Seville; and Pauline in *The Queen of Spades* and Lyubasha at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre.



Liv Redpath

SOPRANO (EDINA, MINNESOTA)

THIS SEASON Oscar in *Un Ballo in Maschera* for her debut and Pamina in *The Magic Flute* at the Met, Die Seele in Schoenberg's *Die Jakobsleiter* with the Berlin Philharmonic, Tytania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Atlanta Opera, Drusilla in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* with the English Concert, Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Covent Garden, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* and Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Santa Fe Opera, Strauss's *Brentano Lieder* with the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, and an appearance at the Sag Harbor Song Festival.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Tytania at the Glyndebourne Festival, Ophélie in *Hamlet* at the Komische Oper Berlin, Sophie in Brussels, Lucia at LA Opera and the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Michal in Handel's *Saul* with the English Concert, Zenobia in Handel's *Radamisto* with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Najade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Edinburgh International Festival, Marguerite de Valois in Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Cincinnati Opera and the Santa Fe Opera, and Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel* at LA Opera.



Charles Castronovo

TENOR (QUEENS, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Gustavo III in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Met, the title role of *Don Carlos* in Geneva, the title role of *Ernani* in concert and a recital with the Munich Radio Orchestra, a gala concert at Athens's Megaron Concert Hall, Don José in *Carmen* in Barcelona, Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra* at La Scala and the Paris Opera, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* at the Bavarian State Opera, and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* in Madrid.

MET APPEARANCES Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute* and *Die Zauberflöte*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, the First Guard in *Manon*, the First Prisoner in *Fidelio*, Beppe in *Pagliacci* (debut, 1999), and the Sailor's Voice in *Tristan und Isolde*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Jason in *Médée* at Staatsoper Berlin; Chevalier des Grieux in *Manon* and Pinkerton at the Vienna State Opera; Don José at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Carlo in *I Masnadieri*, Rodolfo, the title role of *Don Carlo*, and Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Bavarian State Opera; and Don Ottavio at Covent Garden. He is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Quinn Kelsey

BARITONE (HONOLULU, HAWAII)

THIS SEASON Count Anckarström in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Met, the title role of *Simon Boccanegra* at Opera Philadelphia, the title role of *Rigoletto* in Madrid, Filippo Maria Visconti in Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* at the Paris Opera, and Guido di Monforte in *I Vespri Siciliani* in Zurich.

MET APPEARANCES Marcello and Schaunard (debut, 2008) in *La Bohème*, Amonasro in *Aida*, Rigoletto, Germont in *La Traviata*, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, Peter in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Monterone in *Rigoletto*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the title role of *Macbeth* at the Canadian Opera Company, Don Carlo in *Ernani* and Miller in *Luisa Miller* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, the title role of *Falstaff* at the Santa Fe Opera, *Rigoletto* and Count di Luna in Zurich, Amonasro in Dresden, Scarpia in *Tosca* at Cincinnati Opera and Opera Philadelphia, *Rigoletto* at the Vienna State Opera, Marcello at Palm Beach Opera, the Duke of Nottingham in *Roberto Devereux* at LA Opera, and Ford in *Falstaff* at the Dallas Opera. He was the 2015 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leightman.