

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Don Giovanni

CONDUCTOR
Fabio Luisi

PRODUCTION
Michael Grandage

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER
Christopher Oram

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Paule Constable

CHOREOGRAPHER
Ben Wright

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR
James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR
Fabio Luisi

Opera in two acts

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

Saturday, October 29, 2011, 1:00–4:30 pm

New Production

The production of *Don Giovanni* was made possible by generous gifts from the Richard and Susan Braddock Family Foundation, and Sarah and Howard Solomon.

Additional funding was received from Jane and Jerry del Missier, and Mr. and Mrs. Ezra K. Zilkha.

The Metropolitan Opera
2011–2012 Season

The 519th Metropolitan Opera performance of

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's

Don Giovanni

Conductor
Fabio Luisi

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Leporello

Luca Pisaroni

Donna Anna

Marina Rebeka

Don Giovanni

Mariusz Kwiecien*

The Commendatore

Štefan Kocán

Don Ottavio

Ramón Vargas

Donna Elvira

Barbara Frittoli

Zerlina

Mojca Erdmann

Masetto

Joshua Bloom

HARPSICHORD CONTINUO

Fabio Luisi

MANDOLIN SOLO

Joyce Rasmussen Balint

Saturday, October 29, 2011, 1:00–4:30 pm

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Mariusz Kwiecien
in the title role
of Mozart's
Don Giovanni

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Donna Racik, Joseph Colaneri,
Dan Saunders, John Fisher, Natalia Katyukova**
Fight Director **Nigel Poulton**
Assistant Stage Directors **Gregory Anthony Fortner,
Sarah Ina Meyers, Louisa Muller**
Stage Band Conductor **Jeffrey Goldberg**
Italian Coach **Hemdi Kfir**
Prompter **Donna Racik**
Met Titles **Cori Ellison**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and
painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume
Shop, Stephanie Arditti, and Anna Watkins, London**
Wigs by **Metropolitan Opera Wig Department**

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

This production uses fire effects.

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Latecomers will not be admitted during the performance.

* Graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program

Met Titles

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Synopsis

Spain, mid-18th century

Act I

SCENE 1 The Commendatore's home

SCENE 2 A street

SCENE 3 Open country near Don Giovanni's home

SCENE 4 Outside Don Giovanni's home

SCENE 5 Inside Don Giovanni's home

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 2:35 PM)

Act II

SCENE 1 A street

SCENE 2 A courtyard in front of the Commendatore's home

SCENE 3 A cemetery

SCENE 4 Another part of the Commendatore's home

SCENE 5 Don Giovanni's home

Act I

Leporello, servant to the nobleman Don Giovanni, keeps watch outside the Commendatore's home at night. Suddenly, the Commendatore's daughter, Donna Anna, rushes out, struggling with the masked Giovanni and followed by her father. The Commendatore challenges Giovanni to a duel and is killed. Giovanni and Leporello escape. Anna asks her fiancé, Don Ottavio, to avenge her father's death.

In the morning, Giovanni and Leporello encounter one of Giovanni's former conquests, Donna Elvira, who is devastated by his betrayal. Leporello tells her she is neither the first nor the last woman to fall victim to Giovanni and shows her his catalogue with the name of every woman Giovanni has seduced.

Peasants celebrate the marriage of Masetto and Zerlina. Giovanni flirts with the bride, telling her she is destined for a better life. But Elvira tells Zerlina to flee her suitor. She also warns Anna, who is still unaware of the identity of her father's murderer and has asked Giovanni for help in finding the man. Giovanni, for his part, insists that Elvira is mad, and Anna and Ottavio wonder what to believe. As Giovanni leaves, Anna suddenly recognizes his voice as that of the murderer. Devastated but determined, she once more asks Ottavio to avenge her. He wonders how to restore her peace of mind. Giovanni, who has invited the entire wedding party to his home, looks forward to an evening of drinking and dancing.

Outside Giovanni's home, Zerlina asks Masetto to forgive her. Giovanni enters and leads them both inside. Anna, Elvira, and Ottavio appear masked and are invited in by Leporello. In the ballroom, Giovanni dances with Zerlina, then tries to drag her into the adjoining room. When she cries for help, Giovanni blames Leporello. Anna, Elvira, and Ottavio take off their masks and, along with Zerlina and Masetto, accuse Giovanni, who is momentarily surprised but manages to slip away.

Act II

Having exchanged clothes with Giovanni, Leporello takes Elvira on a nighttime walk, leaving his master free to serenade her maid. When Masetto arrives with a band of peasants to hunt down Giovanni, the disguised Don sends them off in various directions, then beats up Masetto. Zerlina finds her bruised fiancé and comforts him.

Later that night, Leporello—still believed by Elvira to be Giovanni—is surprised by Anna, Ottavio, Zerlina, and Masetto, who all denounce the supposed Don. Fearing for his life, Leporello reveals his true identity before making his escape. Ottavio proclaims that he will take revenge on Giovanni and asks the others to look after Anna. Elvira thinks about Giovanni, whom she still loves in spite of everything.

In a cemetery, Giovanni and Leporello meet the statue of the Commendatore, who warns Giovanni that by morning he will laugh no longer. Giovanni forces the terrified Leporello to invite the statue to dinner. The statue accepts.

Once again, Ottavio asks Anna to marry him, but she replies that she will not until her father's death has been avenged.

Elvira arrives at Giovanni's home. She makes a last desperate attempt to persuade him to change his life, but he only laughs at her. The figure of the Commendatore enters and asks Giovanni to repent. When he boldly refuses he is consumed by flames. Elvira, Anna, Ottavio, Zerlina, Masetto, and Leporello appear, contemplating their futures and the fate of an immoral man.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Don Giovanni

Premiere: National Theater (now Estates Theater), Prague, 1787

Aided by his ingenious librettist, Lorenzo Da Ponte, Mozart approached his operatic retelling of the Don Juan myth from a point of view that is neither tragic nor entirely comic, but rather lighthearted, urbane, and ironic. Over the course of a night, a day, and another night, we follow the title character and his earthy comic sidekick, Leporello, through a series of encounters that begins with a fatal duel, moves back and forth between the humorous and the sentimental, and ends with the protagonist being dragged down to hell by a vengeful, ghostly reincarnation of the Commendatore. Buoyed by Mozart's nuanced and insightful score, the opera still rings with psychological truth after more than two centuries.

The Creators

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) was the son of a Salzburg court musician and composer, Leopold, who was also his principal teacher and exhibited him as a musical prodigy throughout Europe. His works continue to enthral audiences around the world and his achievements in opera, in terms of beauty, vocal challenge, and dramatic insight, remain unsurpassed. The extraordinary Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749–1838) led an adventurous life in Venice and Vienna. He converted from Judaism as a youth and joined the Catholic Church, where he took Holy Orders. He supplied librettos for the prominent composers of his time, including Antonio Salieri, and collaborated with Mozart on *Così fan tutte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and *Don Giovanni*. Da Ponte migrated to America and eventually settled in New York, where he was granted the first chair of Italian at Columbia College (now University), and where he was instrumental in developing an audience for Italian opera. The myth of Don Juan appears to have first made it into print in the play *El Burlador de Sevilla y Convidado de Piedra* ("The Trickster of Seville and the Stone Guest," 1630) by the versatile Spanish author and priest Tirso de Molina.

The Setting

The city of Seville in southern Spain, where Mozart originally set his opera, was already famous in his time as a mythical world of winding streets, hot-blooded young men, and exotically beautiful women sequestered behind latticed windows. In his new production, Michael Grandage places the action in an unnamed Spanish city in the mid-18th century

The Music

Mozart's score for this opera teems with the elegance and grace that marks his entire output, which is evident from the first measures of the ravishing overture. This musical refinement is combined with extraordinary dramatic expression. Don Giovanni's famous Act I aria "Fin ch'han dal vino" (the so-called "Champagne" aria) is beautiful but almost vulgar in its graphic depiction of the character's sexual obsession. The tenor's ineffectual loveliness, on the other hand, is depicted in the long, languid lines of the character's two ravishing solos, "Dalla sua pace" (Act I) and "Il mio tesoro" (Act II). Donna Anna's nobility—and perhaps her intransigence—are well reflected in her major arias, "Or sai chi l'onore" in Act I and "Non mi dir" in Act II. The buffoonish (yet astute) Leporello is funny throughout the opera, but his Act I aria "Madamina, il catalogo è questo" (the "Catalogue" aria) is also a towering example of the melding of words and music. Donna Elvira's Act II aria, "Mi tradì quell'alma ingrata," contains extravagant leaps and runs that express the emotions of a person barely holding on to her mental stability. All of these psychological archetypes face off and interact in ensembles that are graceful on the surface but remarkably complex at their core.

Don Giovanni at the Met

Don Giovanni appeared at the Met in 1883 during the company's first season. Victor Maurel, Verdi's original Falstaff, portrayed the title character in several performances during the 1890s, and in 1908 Gustav Mahler conducted an impressive cast, including the legendary Russian bass Fyodor Chaliapin as Leporello. Mahler even played the harpsichord recitative accompaniment himself on a modified piano. The opera then fell out of the repertory until a new Joseph Urban–designed production appeared in 1929, conducted by Tullio Serafin and featuring the glamorous Italian bass Ezio Pinza in what would become his most celebrated role. Cesare Siepi took over for the subsequent generation. The great German conductor Karl Böhm made his company debut with this opera in 1957, leading 29 performances over the following decade. Met Music Director James Levine has conducted 61 performances to date, beginning in 1974. Great interpreters of the title role have included Sherrill Milnes, James Morris, Thomas Hampson, Ferruccio Furlanetto, and Samuel Ramey, the last two alternating with each other in the role of Leporello. Donna Anna has been performed by such great divas as Rosa Ponselle (beginning in 1929), Zinka Milanov (in the 1940s), Joan Sutherland (beginning in 1967), Leontyne Price, Renée Fleming, and Eleanor Steber (during the 1950s and 60s), who had previously made her mark as Donna Elvira. The opera has also showcased such diverse singers as Pilar Lorengar (Met debut as Donna Elvira, 1966), Kiri Te Kanawa, Karita Mattila, and Susan Graham (Elvira), Carol Vaness (Elvira and Anna), Ljuba Welitsch (Anna), Anna Netrebko (Anna and Zerlina), Kathleen Battle, Roberta Peters, Teresa Stratas, Frederica von Stade, Dawn Upshaw, and Bidu Sayão (Zerlina), Bryn Terfel (Giovanni and Leporello), René Pape and Paul Plishka (Leporello), Theodor Uppman (Masetto), and Nicolai Gedda, Beniamino Gigli, and Jan Peerce (Ottavio).

Program Note

“Mozart had experienced how much the Bohemians appreciated his music and how well they executed it,” wrote one of Mozart’s friends after the composer’s death. “This he often mentioned to his acquaintances in Prague, where a hero-worshipping, responsive public and real friends carried him, so to speak, on their shoulders.” Mozart must have loved his time in Prague, finally getting the recognition he badly wanted and felt he deserved but never quite achieved in the more staid, aristocratic Vienna. His love affair with the Bohemian city began in January of 1787, a month or so after a production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*—which had premiered to only modest success in Vienna earlier in 1786—had opened and taken Prague by storm. The opera orchestra and some wealthy admirers of the work paid for Mozart to visit, and he was amazed at what he found:

I was very delighted to look upon all these people leaping about in sheer delight to the music of my *Figaro*, adapted for noisy contra-dances and waltzes; for here nothing is discussed but *Figaro*; nothing is played, blown, sung, or whistled but *Figaro*; no opera is succeeding but *Figaro* and eternally *Figaro*; certainly a great honor for me.

Mozart brought with him on his visit the newly completed Symphony No. 38, which he had written in the city’s honor, and this too met with tremendous enthusiasm from the public and enjoyed repeated performances. Unfortunately, he was able to soak up the adoration in Prague for less than a month before returning to Vienna, but he left with a commission in hand for another opera—this time one that would have its premiere in Prague. The new opera was to become *Don Giovanni*.

Myths and legends about the composition of *Don Giovanni* abound, chief among them that the music was written in an impossibly short amount of time in the few weeks leading up to its October 1787 premiere. And as with most such tales, there is a kernel of truth in the story. Mozart—always known for his frenzied work rate—wrote much of the recitative as well as some of the comical scenes in the weeks preceding the premiere. Most amazing—and most oft-referenced—is that he wrote the overture truly at the last moment, either the day before or the day of the opening, so that the instrumental parts were barely able to be copied in time. But these were the items that Mozart always saved for last when composing operas; the major arias and ensemble numbers had been in the works for months, since shortly after his return to Vienna in February. Mozart accomplished many seemingly miraculous feats, but even he could not have written, rehearsed, and produced a work such as *Don Giovanni* in three weeks’ time. It is impressive enough that he was able to write it in less than a year, despite also turning out three quintets, a sonata, and the divertimentos *Ein musikalischer Spass* (“A Musical Joke”) and the famous *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*—not to mention dealing with the news of his father’s death—during the same span.

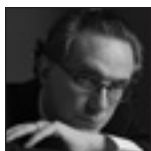
Mozart did the sensible thing and approached Lorenzo Da Ponte, the librettist with whom he had collaborated to such great success on *Le Nozze di Figaro*, as a partner for *Don Giovanni*. And though many scholars have argued that Da Ponte’s libretto for *Don Giovanni* is dramatically a bit of a mess, only saved by Mozart’s transcendent

music, it is important to acknowledge that the Italian playwright was working with a very difficult and complex subject. The Don Juan myth had been the subject of numerous literary, dramatic, musical, philosophical, and popular interpretations, each with its own angle and varying details. To tackle such a well-known subject at a significant length (enough to support a full-length opera), sustain dramatic tension, and provide a text that lends itself to music is no mean feat. In its knitting together of so many different ideas and influences, it is true that the *Don Giovanni* libretto does not have the surgical precision and seamless construction of Da Ponte's text for *Figaro*. But in sacrificing those attributes, it allows greater freedom. It offers more opportunity for the music to be the decisive voice, making the connections and filling in the gaps left by the text—an opportunity Mozart seized to the fullest.

By this time, the composer had completely left all of his contemporaries and his younger self behind and was turning out masterpiece after masterpiece as if he were incapable of anything else—and perhaps he was. The music of *Don Giovanni* is a wonder, at once both an apotheosis of 18th-century Italianate opera and a startling premonition of Romanticism, Wagnerian music drama, and even the psychological dramas of the 20th century. Mozart's most forward-looking work, *Don Giovanni* was unsurprisingly the work most appreciated by the composers of the next century. As the great critic Harold Schonberg wrote, "It is the most Romantic of Mozart's operas, just as it is the most serious, the most powerful, and the most otherworldly.... Mozart was constantly misunderstood by the nineteenth century. He was called the Raphael of music, and was considered an elegant, dainty rococo composer who just happened to have composed *Don Giovanni*." Though operagoers, musicians, and scholars will never tire of debating which of Mozart's operas is the "greatest," this is certainly one of his most widely loved, even today.

But if *Don Giovanni* is Mozart's most enduring and popular opera, it is also his most ambiguous and difficult to interpret. In his own catalog, Mozart labeled the work an opera buffa, or comic opera. But it is difficult to accept that this tale of obsessive promiscuity, infidelity, sexual assault, murder, and the dragging of the protagonist into the yawning mouth of hell is purely a light-hearted, humorous work. Yet there are moments of genuine comedy, and since the impetus for its composition was a commission specifically for a follow-up to *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Mozart was surely sensitive to the expectation of levity. Da Ponte called *Don Giovanni* a *dramma giocoso* (a work that combines serious roles with comic ones). This seems closer to the mark, but the fact that the distinction is based on the combination of serious and comic roles brings up the most important reason for the opera's ambiguity. The tone of *Don Giovanni* is wholly dependent on the production and the singers' interpretations of their parts. The title character can be played as a debonair, confident "bad boy" who seduces his women and the audience into ignoring his dark side. Or he can be played as a vile and violent criminal who rapes and kills to get what he wants. Likewise, Donna Elvira can be a tragic and pitiable shell of a woman, driven mad as she's strung along by the cruel don, or she can be a humorous caricature, her outbursts made so broad and outsized that they become ridiculous. And so on. For this reason, perhaps more than any other opera, *Don Giovanni* is different with each production. No matter how many times you see it, you never really "know" it, and so it draws you back again and again. —Jay Goodwin

The Cast and Creative Team



Fabio Luisi

CONDUCTOR (GENOA, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Don Giovanni*, *Siegfried*, *Manon*, and *La Traviata* at the Met, a concert with the MET Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, *Manon* for his debut at La Scala, and concert engagements with the Cleveland Orchestra, Filarmonica della Scala, Vienna Symphony, and Oslo Philharmonic.

MET APPEARANCES *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Elektra*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Tosca*, *Lulu*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Die Ägyptische Helena*, *Turandot*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Rigoletto*, *Das Rheingold*, and *Don Carlo* (debut, 2005).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is Principal Conductor of the Met and a frequent guest of the Vienna State Opera, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and Berlin's Deutsche Oper and Staatsoper. He made his Salzburg Festival debut in 2003 leading Strauss's *Die Liebe der Danae* (returning the following season for *Die Ägyptische Helena*) and his American debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago leading *Rigoletto*. He also appears regularly with the Orchestre de Paris, Bavarian Radio Symphony, Munich Philharmonic, and Rome's Santa Cecilia Orchestra. He was music director of the Dresden Staatskapelle and Semperoper from 2007 to 2010 and is chief conductor of the Vienna Symphony and music director of Japan's Pacific Music Festival.



Michael Grandage

DIRECTOR (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Don Giovanni* for his debut at the Met, a revival of *Evita* on Broadway, and *Le Nozze di Figaro* for the Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He completes his tenure as artistic director of London's Donmar Warehouse this winter, where his work has included *King Lear* (which was also seen in New York last season at the Brooklyn Academy of Music), *Madame de Sade*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Chalk Garden*, *Don Juan in Soho*, *Othello*, *The Wild Duck*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Grand Hotel*, *The Cut*, *After Miss Julie*, *Caligula* (Olivier Award for Best Director), *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Privates On Parade*, and *Passion Play*. Three of his Donmar productions have transferred to Broadway: *Frost/Nixon*, *Hamlet* with Jude Law, and *Red* (for which he won the Tony Award for Best Director). From 1999 to 2005 he was the artistic director of Sheffield Theatres, where his many productions included *Don Carlos* (Evening Standard Award for Best Director). He made his operatic directing debut in 2010 with *Billy Budd* at the Glyndebourne Festival, followed by *Madama Butterfly* for Houston Grand Opera.



Christopher Oram

SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Don Giovanni* for his Met debut, *Le Nozze di Figaro* for the Glyndebourne Festival Opera, and a revival of *Evita* on Broadway.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is a frequent collaborator with director Michael Grandage and his work for London's Donmar Warehouse includes *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Passion*, *Red* (for which he won a Tony Award for the Broadway production), *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Hamlet* (also in London's West End and on Broadway), *Madame de Sade*, *Twelfth Night*, *Ivanov*, *Othello*, *Parade* (also at Los Angeles's Mark Taper Forum), *Frost/Nixon* (also on the West End and on Broadway), *Guys and Dolls*, *Don Juan in Soho*, *Grand Hotel*, *Henry IV*, *World Music*, *Caligula*, *The Vortex*, *Privates on Parade*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Passion Play*, *Good*, *The Bullet*, and *Power* (Olivier Award). Additional work includes *A View from the Bridge* (Duke of York's), *King Lear* and *The Seagull* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Evita* (Adelphi), *Finding the Sun* and *Marriage Play*, *Power*, *Summerfolk*, *Danton's Death* (National), *Madama Butterfly* (Houston Grand Opera), and *Billy Budd* (Glyndebourne Opera).



Paule Constable

LIGHTING DESIGNER (BRIGHTON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Anna Bolena*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Satyagraha* at the Met, *Così fan tutte* for the Los Angeles Opera, and *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Glyndebourne.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Satyagraha* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She received the 2011 Tony Award for the Broadway production of *War Horse* and received Olivier Awards for *Don Carlos* at London's Gielgud Theatre, *His Dark Materials* at the National Theatre, and *The Chalk Garden* at the Donmar Warehouse. Operatic engagements include *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Rigoletto*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Macbeth* for Covent Garden; *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Billy Budd*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Carmen*, *La Bohème*, and *Rusalka* at Glyndebourne; *Idomeneo*, *Satyagraha*, and *Peter Grimes* for English National Opera; and Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Semele*, and *Agrippina* for Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. She just completed David McVicar's production of Wagner's *Ring* cycle in Strasbourg and *Tristan und Isolde* in Tokyo.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



Ben Wright

CHOREOGRAPHER (BRIGHTON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Don Giovanni* for his Met debut and *Le Nozze di Figaro* for the Glyndebourne Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS In 2008 he founded the contemporary dance company bgroup and has since created a number of works for them. Recent operatic credits include Prokofiev's *Betrothal in a Monastery* for the Toulouse Opera and Paris's Opéra Comique; *The Cunning Little Vixen* and *Rigoletto* for Grange Park Opera; *La Donna del Lago* for Garsington Opera; *Don Giovanni* for Scottish Opera; Janáček's *The Adventures of Mr. Brouček*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Roméo et Juliette* for Opera North; and *La Vie Parisienne*, *La Fanciulla del West*, *Macbeth*, *Faust*, and Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* for Malmö Opera. He has also provided choreography for *Twelfth Night* at the Donmar Warehouse, *Tobias and the Angel* and *The red and brown Water* for The Young Vic, and for dance companies including VERVE, Skånes Dance Theater, and Ludis Dance. As a performer, he created the Prince in *Matthew Bourne's Swan Lake* in 1995, performing throughout the UK, in London's West End, and on Broadway.

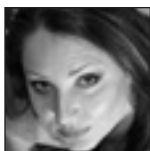


Mojca Erdmann

SOPRANO (HAMBURG, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* for her debut and the Woodbird in *Siegfried* at the Met, the title role of *Lulu* and Ariadne in the German premiere of Wolfgang Rihm's *Dionysos* at the Berlin State Opera, and concert engagements at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Salzburg's Mozart Week, and with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra and Cologne Philharmonie.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS The title role of Mozart's *Zaide* and Zelmira in Haydn's *Armida* at the Salzburg Festival, Blondchen in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Amsterdam, the Woodbird at the Aix-en-Provence Festival and Salzburg Easter Festival, Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* in Stuttgart, Despina in *Così fan tutte* and Zerlina in Baden-Baden, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* in Cologne, and Marzelline in *Fidelio* in Nice. She has also sung in the world premiere of Tōru Takemitsu's *My Way of Life* at the Berlin State Opera; the title role in Rihm's *Proserpina* in 2009 with the Stuttgart Radio Symphony in Schwetzingen, Germany; and the world premiere of *Dionysos* at the 2010 Salzburg Festival.



Barbara Frittoli

SOPRANO (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* at the Met, Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra* with the Vienna State Opera and Zurich Opera, Mimi in *La Bohème* at Covent Garden, Alice Ford in *Falstaff* in Zurich, and the title role of *Adriana Lecouvreur* in Barcelona.

MET APPEARANCES The title roles of *Suor Angelica* and *Luisa Miller*, Amelia, Micaëla in *Carmen* (debut, 1995), Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Desdemona in *Otello*, and the Verdi Requiem.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the Verdi Requiem on tour with Daniel Barenboim in Milan, Paris, and Moscow, the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Mimi with the Turin Opera (both in Turin and on tour in Japan), Fiordiligi and Desdemona with the Vienna State Opera, and *Suor Angelica* at La Scala. She has also sung Liù in *Turandot* with Barcelona's Liceu, Desdemona in Munich, Elisabeth in *Don Carlo* and Donna Elvira in Florence, and Violetta in *La Traviata* with the Vienna State Opera.

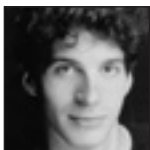


Marina Rebeka

SOPRANO (RIGA, LATVIA)

THIS SEASON Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at the Vienna State Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Zurich Opera, and for her debut at the Met, Violetta in *La Traviata* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Anai in Rossini's *Moïse et Pharaon* with the Collegiate Chorale for her Carnegie Hall debut.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Anai for her 2009 debut at the Salzburg Festival, conducted by Riccardo Muti, followed by debuts in 2010 at Covent Garden as Violetta and the Deutsche Oper Berlin as Donna Anna. She has also sung Britten's *War Requiem* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Micaëla in *Carmen* in Baden-Baden and Valencia, the Countess di Folleville and Madama Cortese in *Il Viaggio a Reims* and Anna in *Maometto II* at Pesaro's Rossini Opera Festival, the Countess di Folleville for her debut at La Scala, and Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* with the Latvian National Opera. In recent seasons she has appeared as Violetta at the Vienna Volksoper, Agilea in Handel's *Teseo* with Berlin's Komische Oper, and Elettra in *Idomeneo* at the Opéra National de Lorraine in Nancy.



Joshua Bloom

BASS (MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA)

THIS SEASON Masetto in *Don Giovanni* at the Met and Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Opera Australia and at the Garsington Opera.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

MET APPEARANCES Masetto (debut, 2008) and Truffaldin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Alidoro in *La Cenerentola* at the Garsington Opera and Schaunard in *La Bohème*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Figaro, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, and Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula* with Opera Australia. He was an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera and has appeared with that company in a number of roles, including Garibaldi in *Rodelinda*, Angelotti in *Tosca*, Count Ribbing in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and the Black Politician in the United States premiere of Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre*. He has also appeared in concert with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and New York Philharmonic.



Štefan Kocán

BASS (TMAVA, SLOVAKIA)

THIS SEASON The Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* at the Met and Masetto in *Don Giovanni* at La Scala and with the Berlin State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES The King in *Aida* (debut, 2009), Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*, and the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlo* with the company on tour in Japan.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino*, the Grand Inquisitor, and Banquo in *Macbeth* at the Vienna State Opera, Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* with Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* in Cologne, Zaccaria in *Nabucco* in Graz, the Grand Inquisitor in Hanover and Copenhagen, the Commendatore in Essen, Osmin in Basel, and Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* in Tokyo. He has also appeared with the Royal Danish Opera, Bratislava Opera, and at Barcelona's Liceu.



Mariusz Kwiecien

BARITONE (KRAKÓW, POLAND)

THIS SEASON Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Don Giovanni* at the Met; Rodrigo in *Don Carlo* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera; *Don Giovanni* in Warsaw, Tokyo, and in concert with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; the title role of Szymanowski's *King Roger* with the Santa Fe Opera; and Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Kraków.

MET APPEARANCES Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Kuligin in *Káťa Kabanová* (debut, 1999), Silvio in *Pagliacci*, Haly in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, and Count Almaviva.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS *Don Giovanni* at the Vienna State Opera, Covent Garden, Bavarian State Opera, San Francisco Opera, Seattle Opera, and Santa Fe Opera; *Eugene Onegin* with the Bavarian State Opera, Bolshoi Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and in Warsaw; Count Almaviva at Covent Garden, the Bavarian State Opera, Glyndebourne Opera, and in Chicago and Madrid; and *King Roger* with the Paris Opera and in Madrid.



Luca Pisaroni

BASS-BARITONE (CIUDAD BOLIVAR, VENEZUELA)

THIS SEASON Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and Caliban in *The Enchanted Island* at the Met and Argante in *Rinaldo* for his debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

MET APPEARANCES Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Publio in *La Clemenza di Tito* (debut, 2005).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Figaro with the San Francisco Opera, Paris Opera, and Vienna State Opera, Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Houston Grand Opera, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* at the Glyndebourne Festival, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, and Melisso in Handel's *Alcina* at Paris's Bastille Opera. He has also sung Tiridate in Handel's *Radamisto* with the Santa Fe Opera, the King in *Ariodante* at the Theater an der Wien, the title role of Cavalli's *Ercole Amante* with the Netherlands Opera, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* at Paris's Bastille Opera, Alidoro in *La Cenerentola* in Santiago, Publio at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, and Achilla in *Giulio Cesare* in Brussels.



Ramón Vargas

TENOR (MEXICO CITY, MEXICO)

THIS SEASON Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at the Met, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Vienna State Opera, Hoffmann in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at La Scala, Alfredo in *La Traviata* with Munich's Bavarian State Opera, and Rodolfo in *La Bohème* for his debut at Barcelona's Liceu.

MET APPEARANCES Nearly 200 performances of 16 leading roles, including Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra*, Rodolfo, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 1992), Foresto in *Attila*, both Gounod and Berlioz's *Faust*, Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*, Roméo, and Lensky in *Eugene Onegin*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has sung in all the major theaters of the world. Highlights include the French version of *Don Carlos* in Vienna, Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* in Paris and Munich, Idomeneo in Salzburg and Paris, and Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Florence, Houston, London, Paris, San Francisco, and Munich. He has also sung des Grieux in *Manon* and Roberto Devereux in Vienna; Werther in Los Angeles, Vienna, and Madrid; Oronte in *I Lombardi* and Lensky in Florence; and Don Ottavio and Alfredo at Covent Garden.

A Conversation with Fabio Luisi

On the eve of the 2011–12 season, the maestro spoke with Met radio announcer Margaret Juntwait about becoming Principal Conductor—and stepping in on short notice to conduct two of opera’s greatest masterpieces, back to back.

Just before the start of the season, you were elevated from Principal Guest Conductor to Principal Conductor. Congratulations!

Thank you. It was very sudden and quite surprising for me, because the news that James Levine had to withdraw from his performances [because of a fall] was somewhat of a shock. I’m very sorry for Jimmy, and my thoughts are with him. But working in this house is a joy. The musical and theatrical level is so high—higher than I’ve experienced in other houses. And in my new position, the musicians and I will work together even more closely and be even more connected than before.

You are conducting the new production of Don Giovanni on short notice. Does it help that this is such a well-known piece?

Absolutely. I have known *Don Giovanni* since my childhood—but I am always trying to explore new aspects of it. To keep it fresh, you have to convince the singers and the orchestra to think that we are performing it for the first time. Forget about everything you have learned before, and try to have a fresh look—like a child who is hearing it for the first time.

Don Giovanni is such a rich piece musically. Is there any part of it that is especially challenging for you as the conductor?

Well, *Don Giovanni* is one of the most perfect operas ever composed, which doesn’t make it any less challenging, because in Mozart every note has meaning. It’s like Wagner or Strauss in that way. So it’s important to make sure that all of the performers are very, very closely connected to the score.

Shortly after Don Giovanni opens, you will step into Maestro Levine’s shoes to conduct the new production of Siegfried. Do these operas complement each other at all, or will it be a complete switch?

Well, music is always complementary. If you play Monteverdi, you find connections with Puccini, for example. And if you play Mozart, you find connections with Wagner. Wagner was educated with the Classical music of Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn. So there are very, very strong links, and we shouldn’t ignore them. Nevertheless, *Siegfried* comes from another era. It is in another language and it is quite different.



Cory Weaver/Metropolitan Opera

Of course, you’re very familiar with the Ring operas. When you’re leading Siegfried, do you have the other three in mind?

Of course. Mainly I have the proportions of the other operas in mind, which is very important for the *Ring*. These are not four different individual operas—it’s one big opera stretched over four nights. And, actually, you can understand the dimension of *Siegfried* or *Götterdämmerung* only if you understand the dimension of *Rheingold*, only if you understand the construction of *Walküre*. So jumping in, as I am, right in the middle with *Siegfried*—it’s quite challenging and exciting! **M**