

GIACOMO PUCCINI

LA BOHÈME

CONDUCTOR

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

PRODUCTION

Franco Zeffirelli

SET DESIGNER

Franco Zeffirelli

COSTUME DESIGNER

Peter J. Hall

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Gil Wechsler

REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR

Mirabelle Ordinaire

C. GRAHAM BERWIND, III

CHORUS DIRECTOR

Tilman Michael

MARIA MANETTI SHREM
GENERAL MANAGER

Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in four acts

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and
Luigi Illica, based on the novel *Scènes
de la Vie de Bohème* by Henri Murger

Saturday, January 25, 2025
8:00–11:05PM

The production of *La Bohème* was made
possible by a generous gift from
Mrs. Donald D. Harrington

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possible by a gift from Mastercard and the
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The Metropolitan Opera

2024–25 SEASON

The 1,401st Metropolitan Opera performance of
GIACOMO PUCCINI'S

LA BOHÈME

CONDUCTOR

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

MARCELLO

David Bizic

MUSETTA

Adela Zaharia

RODOLFO

Matthew Polenzani

CUSTOMHOUSE SERGEANT

Tyler Simpson

COLLINE

Jongmin Park

CUSTOMHOUSE OFFICER

Yohan Yi

SCHAUNARD

Sean Michael Plumb

BENOIT

Donald Maxwell

MIMI

Eleonora Buratto

PARPIGNOL

Marco Jordão

ALCINDORO

Donald Maxwell

Saturday, January 25, 2025, 8:00–11:05PM



A scene from
Puccini's *La Bohème*

Musical Preparation **Howard Watkins,* Caren Levine,*
Lydia Brown,* and Timothy Long**

Assistant Stage Directors **Bruno Baker and Sara Erde**

Associate Designer **David Reppa**

Stage Band Conductor **Joseph Lawson**

Children's Chorus Director **Anthony Piccolo**

Italian Diction Coach **Nicolò Sbuelz**

Prompter **Caren Levine***

Met Titles **Sonya Friedman**

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Opera Wig and Makeup Department**

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The Metropolitan Opera

2024-25 SEASON



A scene from Puccini's *Tosca*

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Synopsis

Act I

Paris, in the 1830s. In their Latin Quarter garret, the near-destitute artist Marcello and poet Rodolfo try to keep warm on Christmas Eve by feeding the stove with pages from Rodolfo's latest drama. Soon, their roommates—Colline, a philosopher, and Schaunard, a musician—return. Schaunard brings food, fuel, and funds that he has collected from an eccentric nobleman. While they celebrate their unexpected fortune, the landlord, Benoit, comes to collect the rent. After getting the older man drunk, the friends urge him to tell of his flirtations, then throw him out in mock indignation at his infidelity to his wife. As the others depart to revel at the Café Momus, Rodolfo remains behind to finish an article, promising to join them later. There is another knock at the door: It is Mimì, a pretty neighbor whose candle has gone out in the stairwell. As she enters the room, she suddenly feels faint. Rodolfo gives her a sip of wine, then helps her to the door and relights her candle. Mimì realizes that she lost her key when she fainted, and as the two search for it, both candles go out. Rodolfo finds the key and slips it into his pocket. In the moonlight, he takes Mimì's hand and tells her about his dreams. She recounts her life alone in a lofty garret, embroidering flowers and waiting for the spring. Rodolfo's friends call from outside, telling him to join them. He responds that he is not alone and will be along shortly. Happy to have found each other, Mimì and Rodolfo leave, arm in arm, for the café.

Act II

Amid the shouts of street hawkers near the Café Momus, Rodolfo buys Mimì a bonnet and introduces her to his friends. They all sit down and order supper. Marcello's former sweetheart Musetta makes a noisy entrance on the arm of the elderly, but wealthy, Alcindoro. The ensuing tumult reaches its peak when, trying to gain Marcello's attention, she loudly sings the praises of her own popularity. Sending Alcindoro away to buy her a new pair of shoes, Musetta finally falls into Marcello's arms. A parade of soldiers passes by the café as the friends join the crowd of revelers.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:00PM)

Act III

At dawn at the Barrière d'Enfer, a toll gate on the edge of Paris, a customs official admits farm women to the city. Mimì arrives, searching for the place where Marcello and Musetta now live. When the painter appears, she tells him of her distress over Rodolfo's incessant jealousy. She says that she believes it is best

that they part. As Rodolfo emerges from the tavern, Mimì hides nearby. Rodolfo tells Marcello that he wants to separate from Mimì, blaming her flirtatiousness. Pressed for the real reason, he breaks down, saying that her illness can only grow worse in the poverty that they share. Overcome with emotion, Mimì comes forward to say goodbye to her lover. Upon hearing Musetta's laughter, Marcello runs back into the tavern. While Mimì and Rodolfo recall past happiness, Marcello returns with Musetta, quarreling about her flirting with a customer. They hurl insults at each other and part, but Mimì and Rodolfo decide to remain together until springtime.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 10:00PM)

Act IV

Months later in the garret, Rodolfo and Marcello, now separated from their lovers, reflect on their loneliness. Colline and Schaunard bring a meager meal. To lighten their spirits, the four stage a dance, which turns into a mock duel. At the height of the hilarity, Musetta bursts in with news that Mimì is outside, too weak to come upstairs. As Rodolfo runs to her aid, Musetta relates how Mimì begged to be taken to Rodolfo to die. She is made as comfortable as possible, while Musetta asks Marcello to sell her earrings for medicine and Colline goes off to pawn his overcoat. Left alone, Mimì and Rodolfo recall their meeting and their first happy days, but she is seized with violent coughing. When the others return, Musetta gives Mimì a muff to warm her hands, and Mimì slowly drifts into unconsciousness. Musetta prays for Mimì, but it is too late. The friends realize that she is dead, and Rodolfo collapses in despair.



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Giacomo Puccini

La Bohème

Premiere: Teatro Regio, Turin, 1896

La Bohème—the passionate, timeless, indelible story of love among young artists in Paris—can stake its claim as the world’s most popular opera. It has a marvelous ability to make a powerful first impression (even to those new to opera) and to reveal previously unnoticed treasures after dozens of hearings. At first glance, *La Bohème* is the definitive depiction of the joys and sorrows of love and loss; on closer inspection, it explores the deep emotional significance hidden in the trivial things—a bonnet, an old overcoat, a chance meeting with a neighbor—that make up our everyday lives. Following the breakthrough success of *Manon Lescaut* three years earlier, *La Bohème* established Puccini as the leading Italian opera composer of his generation.

The Creators

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924) was immensely popular in his own lifetime, and his mature works remain staples in the repertory of most of the world’s opera companies. His operas are celebrated for their mastery of detail, sensitivity to everyday subjects, copious melody, and economy of expression. Puccini’s librettists for *La Bohème*, Giuseppe Giacosa (1847–1906) and Luigi Illica (1857–1919), also collaborated with him on his next two operas, *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly*. Giacosa, a dramatist, was responsible for the stories, and Illica, a poet, worked primarily on the words themselves. The French author Henri Murger (1822–61) drew on his own early experiences as a poor writer in Paris to pen an episodic prose novel, *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*, which became the basis for the opera.

The Setting

The libretto sets the action in Paris, circa 1830. This is not a random setting but rather reflects the issues and concerns of a particular time and place. After the upheavals of revolution and war, French artists had lost their traditional support base of aristocracy and Church, and they were desperate for new sources of income. The rising bourgeoisie took up the burden of patronizing artists and earned their contempt in return. The story, then, centers on self-conscious youths at odds with mainstream society, feeling themselves morally superior to the rules of the bourgeoisie (specifically regarding sexual mores) and expressing their independence with affectations of speech and dress. The bohemian

ambience of this opera is clearly recognizable in any modern urban center. *La Bohème* captures this ethos in its earliest days.

The Music

Lyrical and touchingly beautiful, the score of *La Bohème* exerts an immediate emotional pull. Many of its most memorable melodies are built incrementally, with small intervals between the notes that carry the listener with them on their lyrical path. This is a distinct contrast to the grand leaps and dives on which earlier operas often depended for emotional effect. *La Bohème*'s melodic structure perfectly captures the "small people" (as Puccini called them) of the drama and the details of everyday life. The two great love arias in Act I—the tenor's "Che gelida manina" and the soprano's "Si, mi chiamano Mimi"—seduce the listener, beginning conversationally, with great rushes of emotion seamlessly woven into more trivial expressions. In other places, small alterations to a melody can morph the meaning of a thought or an emotion. A change of tempo or orchestration transforms Musetta's famous, exuberant Act II waltz into the nostalgic, bittersweet tenor-baritone duet in Act IV, as the bohemians remember happier times. Similarly, the "Streets of Paris" theme first appears as a foreshadowing in Act I, when one of the bohemians suggests going out on the town; hits full flower in Act II, when they (and we) are actually there; and becomes a bitter, chilling memory at the beginning of Act III, when it is slowed down and re-orchestrated.

Met History

La Bohème had its Met premiere while the company was on tour in Los Angeles in 1900. Nellie Melba sang Mimi and improbably added the mad scene from Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* as an encore after the final curtain (a practice that she maintained for several other performances). This production lasted until 1952, when one designed by Rolf Gérard and directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, who insisted that his name be removed after a disagreement with some of the singers, replaced it. In 1977, *La Bohème* served as the first opera telecast as part of the *Live from the Met* series, starring Luciano Pavarotti and Renata Scotto in a new production directed by Fabrizio Melano. The spectacular current production by Franco Zeffirelli premiered on December 14, 1981, with James Levine leading an impressive cast that included Teresa Stratas, Scotto (as Musetta), José Carreras, Richard Stilwell, and James Morris. *La Bohème* was presented at the Met in 59 consecutive seasons after its first appearance and has appeared in all but nine seasons since 1900, making it the most performed opera in company history. Having been presented more than 500 times since its premiere, Zeffirelli's staging is the most performed production in Met history.

Program Note

When Giacomo Puccini decided—in the wake of his first major success, *Manon Lescaut* (1893)—to write *La Bohème*, he did so against a fascinating historical backdrop stretching back four decades. The French writer Henri Murger's 1849 drama and 1851 novel about the poor, young, artistic “bohemians” of Paris owed their popularity in part to Europe's roiling Revolutions of 1848; tales of idealistic, nonconformist youths with social reform on their minds attracted new interest in revolutionary times. Puccini might well have seen some of his own youthful Milanese days in this story as well, a reminder of the Scapigliati (“the scruffy or disheveled ones”)—an important group of convention-defying painters, writers (including Verdi's collaborator Arrigo Boito), and musicians active in salon circles in the 1860s and 1870s. The story that Puccini and his librettists, Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, fashioned from Murger might seem laughably simple at first—boy meets girl, they break up, she dies—but it is made more profound by its realism, a trend of the times for which the influential Austrian critic Eduard Hanslick sharply criticized *La Bohème*. The realistic depiction of poverty, artistic striving with little chance of success, and the destruction of love by disease and lack of means: All of this puts a different sociopolitical frame around the love story. “Non basta amor!,” cries Rodolfo, and lamentably, he is right. Love is not enough.

The creation of *La Bohème* began with a highly public controversy between two of the foremost opera composers of the day: Puccini and Ruggero Leoncavallo, fresh off the colossal success of *Pagliacci* (1892). In circumstances that are still mysterious, Leoncavallo was furious to discover that Puccini was working on *La Bohème*, as he too was developing an opera on the same subject. The imbroglio hit the newspapers, with Puccini writing to Milan's *Corriere della Sera* (*The Evening Courier*) on March 21, 1893, “Let him compose, and I will compose, and the public will judge.” And they have: Leoncavallo's version may have been more successful at the outset, but Puccini's opera has long since outstripped that of his rival. And no wonder: It was a considerable feat to compose an opera in the wake of Wagner and late Verdi, all the more so since Puccini carefully devised his own method of composing acts in which the music never stops, as well as his own fast-paced conversational style, learning the lessons of those two giants without resorting to imitation.

The characters of Puccini's opera differ in some respects from Murger's originals, especially Mimì, who is flightier and more of a gold digger in the French than in the Italian. Puccini's lovable seamstress is a variation on a turn-of-century literary type known as the “femme fragile,” or “fragile woman”; we identify Mimì as such by her delicacy, refinement, association with flowers and moonlight, pallor, and consumption. Eros and Death join hands in opera yet again. When she introduces herself to Rodolfo in “Sì, mi chiamano Mimì,” she sings ecstatically of the flowers that speak to her of love and springtime, and

we hear a brief, poignant emphasis on B minor: the harmony to which she will die three acts later.

The other important female character, Musetta, is what Parisians in 1830 would have called a "lorette," or a "good-time girl" with a string of protectors, but we are not invited to scorn or condemn her; she is too high spirited and loyal, too loving, for that. Her celebrated waltz-aria, "Quando m'en vo'," gives us a welcome pause in the helter-skelter action of Act II, and the swirl of her skirts, the waves of sensual delight in the orchestra remind us that Puccini's famous melodies are inseparable from their masterful orchestrations. When Musetta shrieks that her shoes are killing her (what woman would not sympathize?) in order to rid herself of her latest sugar daddy, even as Marcello is declaring his renewed love for her, we can only laugh along with such a spirited and clever creature. Her tenderness to Mimi in the final act confirms her likeability; in fact, the depiction of male and female friendship is one of the opera's most endearing traits. And if orchestration is crucial to Puccinian melody, so too are his trademark harmonies. When he swerves suddenly from G major to A major for "O soave fanciulla" in Act I, the effect is magic, achieved through remarkably economic means.

We meet the male characters first and in a distinctive way; just as Mozart withholds the introduction of the Countess until Act II of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Puccini makes us wait for Mimi's appearance. And just as Verdi catapults the audience into the comic maelstrom of *Falstaff* right at the start, with no orchestral prelude or scene-setting chorus, Puccini dives into Act I without throat-clearing, the four bohemians entering immediately, two by two. (Nor is this Puccini's only reference to Verdi. The quartet at the end of Act III, with Mimi and Rodolfo bidding each other the saddest of farewells and Marcello and Musetta quarreling yet again, is a nod to the design of the Act II quartet in *Otello*.) We encounter the tempestuous painter Marcello first, his music stabbing at dotted rhythms in somewhat the same way that he stabs at his painting of the Red Sea parting, and after him, the young poet Rodolfo, whose very first strains foreshadow the lyrical tenderness of "Che gelida manina" later in the act. It is typical of Puccini to prefigure the "big tunes" to come and then repeat fragments later on to trigger memories and emotions.

The philosopher Colline and the group's ironist-in-chief, the composer Schaunard, enter next, and it is telling that Marcello's assertive melody comes to characterize all of the bohemians together, hippie-like in their lack of discipline, their rejection of social conventions, their hedonistic ethos, their espousal of free love, their ironic twitting of the comfortable bourgeoisie. The conversational style of this music, the declamatory chatter above a lively orchestra, the colloquialisms: This is something new on the operatic scene. We hear this sort of hectic activity again in Act II, when the string of rule-breaking

parallel chords for three trumpets in the Café Momus theme anticipate Stravinsky's Shrovetide Fair music in *Petrushka* and as the toymaker Parpignol sells his wares to music of staccato, childlike charm. Puccini makes a practice in *La Bohème* of contrasting this sort of crowd music and boisterous male banter with his distinctive, expansive lyricism, which slows time and tries, however unsuccessfully, to make love last forever. Indeed, time is of the essence in this opera, as the sands of Mimi's life and of the bohemians' youth are running out. In Act IV, Puccini underscores the gravity, the inevitability, of time's passage, and the powerlessness of memory to bring what was beautiful and bygone back, by weaving a tapestry of musical reminiscences. Here, death is not transcendence. Unlike with Violetta's otherwise similar death scene in Verdi's *La Traviata*, there is no heaven, only loss.

Puccini's score was finally completed at midnight on December 10, 1895. In the autograph manuscript, the composer wrote "lunga" ("long") with an exaggerated fermata (pause symbol) at the moment of Mimi's death and sketched a skull-and-crossbones in the left-hand margin. Whether he meant it ironically, as a tiny dash of cynicism to obviate sentimentality, we cannot know. But when Puccini tells us, the listeners, of her death—with a single eloquent B-minor chord in the orchestra, followed by the massive orchestral recurrence of Mimi's deathbed greeting to Rodolfo ("Sono andati?"), and the solemn "Addio" cadence of Colline's farewell to his overcoat—the characters', and composer's, grief becomes ours. Distance from what we see and hear is impossible to maintain. Puccini's publisher Giulio Ricordi was overjoyed when he received Puccini's masterpiece, swearing that it would make the orchestra dissolve in tears. "If this time you have not succeeded in hitting the nail squarely on the head," he wrote to the composer, "I will give up my profession and sell salami."

—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.



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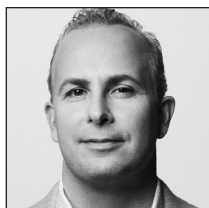
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The Cast



Yannick Nézet-Séguin

CONDUCTOR (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *La Bohème*, Jeanine Tesori's *Grounded*, *Tosca*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Aida*, and *Salome* at the Met; concerts with the Met Orchestra and Met Orchestra Chamber Ensemble at Carnegie Hall; and concerts with the Orchestre Métropolitain, Philadelphia Orchestra, Curtis Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic, and Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 2009 debut conducting *Carmen*, he has led more than 200 performances of 24 operas, as well as numerous galas and concerts with the Met Orchestra at Carnegie Hall and on tour in Europe and Asia.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is in his sixth season as the Met's Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer Music Director and is Artistic Director of the company's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. He has served as music director of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 2012 and became the orchestra's artistic director in 2023. He has served as artistic director and principal conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000; honorary conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, where he was music director for ten seasons, since 2018; honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe since 2016; and principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra between 2008 and 2014. He has won four Grammy Awards, of 13 nominations.



David Bizic

BARITONE (BELGRADE, SERBIA)

THIS SEASON Marcello in *La Bohème* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, Marcello, and Albert in *Werther* (debut, 2014).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Sgt. Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at Opera North, Escamillo in *Carmen* in Toulon, Marcello at the Seiji Ozawa Music Academy, and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* in Toulon and Dijon. He has also sung Germont in *La Traviata*, Sgt. Belcore, and Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Toulon; Marcello at Irish National Opera; Escamillo in Macerata, Dijon, and at the Israeli Opera; Zurga in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* in concert in Dortmund; Procolo in Donizetti's *Le Convenienze ed Inconvenienze Teatrali* in Geneva; Lescaut in *Manon Lescaut* in Barcelona; the title role of *Eugene Onegin* in Reims, Metz, and Limoges; Zurga and Marcello in Bordeaux; Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Toulon, Geneva, and at the Flemish Opera; Albert at Covent Garden; the title role of *Don Giovanni* in Rouen; Publio in *La Clemenza di Tito* in Strasbourg and Montpellier; the Count in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Saint-Etienne; and Leporello in *Don Giovanni* at the Vienna State Opera, Paris Opera, Ravinia Festival, LA Opera, and Deutsche Oper Berlin.



Eleonora Buratto

SOPRANO (MANTUA, ITALY)

THIS SEASON Mimi in *La Bohème* at the Met; Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* at the Paris Opera, in Baden-Baden, and in concert with the Berlin Philharmonic; the title role of *Tosca* in concert with the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia; Amelia Grimaldi in *Simon Boccanegra* in Rome; Verdi's Requiem in Dresden; Elisabetta in *Roberto Devereux* in Valencia; and Leonora in *Il Trovatore* at Covent Garden.

MET APPEARANCES Mimi, Elisabetta di Valois in *Don Carlo*, Cio-Cio-San, Liù in *Turandot*, and Norina in *Don Pasquale* (debut, 2015).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Desdemona in Verdi's *Otello* and *Tosca* at the Bavarian State Opera, Antonia/Stella in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and Amelia Grimaldi at La Scala, the title role of *Maria Stuarda* in Valencia, the title role of *Suor Angelica* at the Vienna State Opera, Cio-Cio-San in Rome, and Elisabetta di Valois in Florence. She has also sung the title role of *Anna Bolena* in Valencia, Mimi at the Vienna State Opera and in Madrid, Desdemona in Rossini's *Otello* and Anai in *Moïse et Pharaon* at Pesaro's Rossini Opera Festival, Alice Ford in *Falstaff* at the Vienna State Opera, and Elvira in *Ernani* in Palermo.



Donald Maxwell

BARITONE (PERTH, SCOTLAND)

THIS SEASON Benoit/Alcindoro in *La Bohème* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES Hortensius in *La Fille du Régiment* (debut, 2008) and Benoit/Alcindoro.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Benoit/Alcindoro in concert with the Philadelphia Orchestra; the Second Priest in *Die Zauberflöte*, Hortensius, and Alcindoro at Covent Garden; the Notary in *Don Pasquale* with Random Opera Company; the Sacristan in *Tosca* and Fra Melitone in *La Forza del Destino* at Welsh National Opera; and Hanezò in *L'Amico Fritz* in concert at Scottish Opera. He has sung Dai Greatcoat in the world premiere of Iain Bell's *In Parenthesis* at Welsh National Opera, the Sacristan at Covent Garden, Alfred Doolittle in *My Fair Lady* in Paris, Swallow in *Peter Grimes* in Zurich, Sancho Panza in *Don Quichotte* with Chelsea Opera Group, Pooh-Bah in *The Mikado* at English National Opera, and Dr. Bloom in Olga Neuwirth's *American Lulu* at the Bregenz Festival and Edinburgh International Festival. He has also appeared at La Scala, the Vienna State Opera, Houston Grand Opera, the Wexford Festival, and the Glyndebourne Festival, among others.



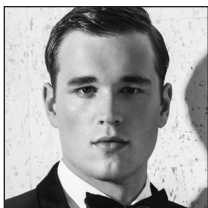
Jongmin Park

BASS (SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA)

THIS SEASON Colline in *La Bohème* at the Met, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Vodnik in *Rusalka* at Staatsoper Berlin, Fasolt in *Das Rheingold* at La Scala, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, Kuno / the Hermit in *Der Freischütz* in concert with the Kammerakademie Potsdam, and Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Bayreuth Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Colline (debut, 2019).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Between 2010 and 2013, he was a member of the ensemble at Staatsoper Hamburg. Recent performances include Ramfis in *Aida* at the St. Margarethen Opera Festival; Fafner in *Das Rheingold* and Siegfried and Hunding in *Die Walküre* in Budapest; Créon in *Médée* and Pogner in Madrid; the Friar in *Don Carlo*, Banquo in *Macbeth*, Vodník, and Colline at La Scala; Banquo at Korea National Opera; and King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* in Lorraine. He has also sung Ramfis in Madrid; Zaccaria in *Nabucco* at the St. Margarethen Opera Festival; Count Horn in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Truffaldin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, and Capellio in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* at La Scala; and Abimélech in *Samson et Dalila* at Staatsoper Berlin.



Sean Michael Plumb

BARITONE (BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON Schaunard in *La Bohème* and Papageno in *The Magic Flute* at the Met, Frank/Fritz in *Die Tote Stadt* at the Bavarian State Opera, Melot in Act II of *Tristan und Isolde* in concert with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Schoenberg's *Die Jakobsleiter* with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, Handel's *Messiah* with the New Choral Society, Fauré's Requiem with Orchestra of St. Luke's, and concerts in Munich and Dublin.

MET APPEARANCES Harlekin in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (debut, 2022) and Schaunard.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He was previously a member of the Bavarian State Opera, where his roles have included Shchelkalov in *Boris Godunov*, Marcello and Schaunard in *La Bohème*, Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Prince Henri de Condé in Penderecki's *Die Teufel von Loudun*, Melot, Ottokar in *Der Freischütz*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, and Olav Bjaaland in the world premiere of Miroslav Srnka's *South Pole*, among many others. He has also sung Younger Galileo / Salvati in Philip Glass's *Galileo Galilei* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Figaro at Seattle Opera, Harlekin in Hong Kong, Albert in *Werther* at Houston Grand Opera, and Maximilian in *Candide* in Lyon.



Matthew Polenzani

TENOR (EVANSTON, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at the Met, Maurizio in *Adriana Lecouvreur* in Madrid, Schubert's *Schwanengesang* with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* in Barcelona, Anatol in *Vanessa* in concert with the National Symphony Orchestra, the title role of *Werther* at the Vienna State Opera, the title role of *Otello* in Stuttgart, the title role of *Idomeneo* at San Francisco Opera, and concerts and recitals in Budapest, Frankfurt, and at Lyric Opera of Chicago.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 1997 debut as Boyar Khrushchov in *Boris Godunov*, he has sung more than 450 performances of 44 roles, including Pinkerton, Rodolfo, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Giasone in *Medea*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, the Italian Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Macduff in *Macbeth*, and the title roles of *Don Carlos*, *Idomeneo*, and *Roberto Devereux*.

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



Adela Zaharia

SOPRANO (ARAD, ROMANIA)

THIS SEASON Musetta in *La Bohème* for her debut at the Met; Violetta in *La Traviata* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, and in Madrid; the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Bavarian State Opera; and Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at the Komische Oper Berlin.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Frankfurt, Giulietta in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Violetta at Dutch National Opera, Gilda in *Rigoletto* in Madrid, Lucia at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Donna Anna at Staatsoper Berlin. She has also sung Violetta in Dresden, Leipzig, and at LA Opera; Konstanze in Hamburg; Donna Anna, Lucia, and Elvira in *I Puritani* at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein; Donna Anna at San Francisco Opera, the Paris Opera, Dutch National Opera, Covent Garden, and in Madrid; and Lucia Ashton in the world premiere of Marina Abramović's *7 Deaths of Maria Callas* at the Bavarian State Opera and at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and Paris Opera. She won first prize in the 2019 Operalia competition.