

GIUSEPPE VERDI

AIDA

CONDUCTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

PRODUCTION
Michael Mayer

SET DESIGNER
Christine Jones

COSTUME DESIGNER
Susan Hilferty

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Kevin Adams

PROJECTION DESIGN
59

CHOREOGRAPHER
Oleg Glushkov DEBUT

PRODUCTION CONSULTANT
Stephen Pickover

CHORUS DIRECTOR
Donald Palumbo

MARIA MANETTI SHREM
GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in four acts

Libretto by Antonio Ghislanzoni, based on
a scenario by Auguste Mariette

Tuesday, December 31, 2024
6:30–9:45PM

New Year's Eve Gala
New Production Premiere

The production of *Aida* is sponsored by
C. Graham Berwind, III

Throughout the 2024–25 season, the Met
continues to honor Ukraine and its brave
citizens as they fight to defend their country
and its cultural heritage.

The Metropolitan Opera

2024–25 SEASON

The 1,192nd Metropolitan Opera performance of
GIUSEPPE VERDI'S

AIDA

CONDUCTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

RAMFIS
Dmitry Belosselskiy

RADAMÈS
Piotr Beczala

AMNERIS
Judit Kutasi

AIDA
Angel Blue

KING
Morris Robinson*

MESSENGER
Yongzhao Yu

PRIESTESS
Amanda Batista**

AMONASRO
Quinn Kelsey

Tonight's performances of the roles of Aida and Radamès are underwritten by the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Great Singers Fund.

This performance is being broadcast live on the SiriusXM app and streamed at metopera.org.

Tuesday, December 31, 2024, 6:30–9:45PM



A scene from Verdi's
Aida

Musical Preparation **John Keenan, Howard Watkins,***
Liora Maurer, Jonathan C. Kelly, and Israel Gursky
Assistant Stage Directors **Melanie Bacaling, Bruno Baker,**
Jonathon Loy, Marcus Shields, and J. Knighten Smit
Assistant Set Designer **Amelia Cook**
Assistant Costume Designer **Amanda Whidden**
For 59

Lead Video Designer **Mark Grimmer**
Senior Video Associate **Matt Taylor**
Animators **Laurent De Vleeshouwer and**
Lawrence Watson

Associate Video Production **Anna Jones**
Stage Band Conductor **Joseph Lawson**
Italian Diction Coach **Hemdi Kfir**
Prompter **Jonathan C. Kelly**
Met Titles **Christopher Bergen**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and
painted by **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
Costumes constructed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume**
Department; Das Gewand, Düsseldorf; Lynne Baccus, New
York; Costume Armour, New York; Custom Leather Shop,
South Orange; D'Alessio Galliano, Rome; Gene Mignola,
Inc., New York; Fabio Toblini, New York; and Tricorne Inc.,
New York
Wigs and makeup constructed and executed by **Metropolitan**
Opera Wig and Makeup Department

This production uses smoke effects.

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

Before the performance begins, please switch off cell phones
and other electronic devices.

* Graduate of the
Lindemann Young Artist
Development Program

** Member of the
Lindemann Young Artist
Development Program

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Met Titles

To activate, press the red button to the right of the screen in front of
your seat and follow the instructions provided. To turn off the display,
press the red button once again. If you have questions please ask an
usher at intermission.

Synopsis

In the early 20th century, a group of archaeologists unearths an Egyptian tomb unseen for millennia. One finds an ancient dagger with a royal insignia. As they take in the architecture and hieroglyphs, they visualize the reign of the pharaohs.

Act I

In ancient Egypt, at the royal palace in Memphis, the high priest Ramfis tells the warrior Radamès that Ethiopia is preparing another attack against Egypt. Radamès hopes to command the Egyptian army. He is in love with Aida, the Ethiopian slave of Princess Amneris, the King's daughter, and he believes that victory in the war would enable him to free and marry her. But Amneris also loves Radamès and is jealous of Aida, whom she suspects of being her rival for Radamès's affection. A messenger brings news that the Ethiopians are advancing. The King names Radamès to lead the army, and all prepare for war. Left alone, Aida is torn between her love for Radamès and loyalty to her native country, where her father, Amonasro, is king.

In the temple of Vulcan, the priests consecrate Radamès to the service of the god Ptah. Ramfis orders Radamès to protect the homeland.

Act II

Ethiopia has been defeated, and in her chambers, Amneris waits for the triumphant return of Radamès. Alone with Aida, she pretends that Radamès has fallen in battle, then says that he is still alive. Aida's reactions leave no doubt that she loves Radamès, but Amneris is certain that she will defeat her rival.

At the city gates, the King and Amneris observe the victory celebrations and praise Radamès's triumph. Soldiers lead in the captured Ethiopians, among them Amonasro, who signals his daughter not to reveal his identity as king. Amonasro's eloquent plea for mercy impresses Radamès, and the warrior asks that the order for the prisoners to be executed be overruled and that they be freed instead. The King grants his request but keeps Amonasro in custody. He declares that as a victor's reward, Radamès will have Amneris's hand in marriage.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 8:00PM)

Act III

On the eve of Amneris's wedding, Ramfis and Amneris pray in a temple on the banks of the Nile. Nearby, Aida is waiting for Radamès, lost in thoughts of her homeland. Suddenly, Amonasro appears. Appealing to Aida's sense of duty, he makes her promise to discover from Radamès which route the Egyptian army will take to invade Ethiopia. Amonasro hides as Radamès arrives. He and Aida dream about their future life together, and Aida convinces him to run away with her. Aida asks him about his army's route, and just as he reveals the secret, Amonasro emerges from his hiding place. Realizing what he has done, Radamès is horrified. Aida and Amonasro try to calm him when Ramfis and Amneris emerge from the temple. Father and daughter are able to escape, but Radamès surrenders himself to the high priest's guards.

Act IV

Radamès awaits trial as a traitor, believing Aida to be dead. Amneris summons him, but even after he learns that Aida has survived, he rejects Amneris's offer to save him if he gives up his lover. Brought before the priests, Radamès refuses to answer their accusations, and they condemn him to be buried alive. Amneris begs for mercy, but the judges will not change their verdict.

Aida has hidden in the vault to share Radamès's fate. They express their love for the last time while Amneris, alone in the temple above, prays.



Aida on Demand

Looking for more *Aida*? Check out **Met Opera on Demand**, our online streaming service, to enjoy outstanding presentations from past Met seasons, including a telecast of Leontyne Price's legendary Met farewell in 1985, a thrilling radio broadcast featuring Luciano Pavarotti as Radamès, and three star-studded *Live in HD* transmissions. Start your seven-day free trial and explore the full catalog of more than 850 complete performances at metoperaondemand.org.

Support for Met Opera on Demand is provided by the Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Foundation and Dorothy and Charles H. Jenkins, Jr.

In Focus

Giuseppe Verdi

Aida

Premiere: Khedivial Opera House, Cairo, 1871

This grandest of grand operas, *Aida* features an epic backdrop for what is in essence an intimate love story. Set in ancient Egypt and packed with magnificent choruses, complex ensembles, and elaborate ballets, the opera never loses sight of its three protagonists: Amneris, the proud daughter of the pharaoh; her slave Aida, who is secretly the princess of the rival kingdom of Ethiopia; and Radamès, the Egyptian warrior whom they both love. Few operas have matched *Aida* in its exploration of the conflict of private emotion and public duty, and perhaps no other has remained to the present day so unanimously appreciated by audiences and critics alike.

The Creators

In a remarkable career spanning six decades in the theater, Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) composed 26 operas, at least half of which are at the core of today's repertoire. His role in Italy's cultural and political development also made him an icon in his native country. The story of *Aida* is thought to be the creation of Auguste Mariette (1821–81), an extraordinary French archaeologist who was the founder of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Camille du Locle (1832–1903), who collaborated on the scenario with Mariette and suggested the story to Verdi, had worked with the composer on the libretto for *Don Carlos*. *Aida*'s librettist, Antonio Ghislanzoni (1824–93), was a novelist and poet as well as the creator of some 85 libretti, most of which are forgotten today. He had previously worked with Verdi on the revised version of *La Forza del Destino* (1869).

The Setting

The libretto indicates merely that the opera takes place in "ancient Egypt, in the time of the pharaohs." This may sound vague, but it was a clear direction to approach the drama as myth rather than anthropology or history. Europe's fascination with the ancient Nile civilization had been piqued with stories from Napoleon's Egyptian expedition at the end of the 18th century and continued into the mid-19th century with the numerous archaeological discoveries being taken from the sands of Egypt and shipped to museums in the European capitals. Michael Mayer's new Met production takes a cue from this period and frames the story through the eyes of archaeologists exploring a newly discovered tomb.

The Music

The score of *Aida* is a sophisticated example of Italian Romanticism, imbued with a convincingly mysterious and exotic hue. Making no claims to authenticity, Verdi created a unique musical palette for this opera. The grandeur of the subject is aptly conveyed with huge patriotic choruses (Acts I and II) and the unforgettable Triumphal March (Act II). These public moments often serve as frames for the solos of the leading tenor and soprano: his noble “Celeste Aida” right at the beginning of Act I, her demanding “Ritorna vincitor!” that follows, and her great internal journey, “Qui Radamès verrà ... O patria mia,” in Act III. Perhaps most impressive in this drama of public-versus-private needs are the instances of a solo voice pitted directly against complex ensembles and vast choruses: the tenor in the temple scene in Act I, the mezzo-soprano in the judgment scene in Act IV, and especially the soprano in the stunning triumphal scene in Act II.

Met History

Aida first came to the Met during the “German Seasons” of the 1880s and was performed in German until 1890. *Aida* has been among the most popular operas in the Met’s repertory since those early days. Arturo Toscanini made his Met debut conducting a spectacular new production for Opening Night of the 1908–09 season. That performance also featured Emmy Destinn (who would sing the title role 52 times at the Met through 1920) in her company debut, as well as Louise Homer (who sang Amneris 97 times between 1900 and 1927), Enrico Caruso (91 performances as Radamès at the Met between 1903 and 1919), and Pasquale Amato (70 appearances as Amonasro between 1908 and 1921). Other unforgettable *Aidas* at the Met have included Zinka Milanov (1938–58), Elisabeth Rethberg (1922–42), Leontyne Price (from 1961 until her farewell appearance at the Met in 1985), Martina Arroyo (1965–1986), and Gilda Cruz-Romo (1973–1979). A number of exceptional tenors have appeared as Radamès over the years, including Giovanni Martinelli (a company record 123 times between 1913 and 1943), Giacomo Lauri-Volpi (1925–1933), Mario Del Monaco (1951–1954), Carlo Bergonzi (1956–1978), Richard Tucker (1965–1973), and Luciano Pavarotti (1986–2001). In 1988, Sonja Frisell directed a new staging, with sets by the acclaimed film production designer Gianni Quaranta. James Levine conducted a cast headed by Leona Mitchell, Fiorenza Cossotto, Plácido Domingo, Sherrill Milnes, and Paul Plishka. The production was telecast a year later, with Aprile Millo and Dolora Zajick squaring off as *Aida* and Amneris, and appeared in three of the company’s *Live in HD* cinema transmissions. This season, director Michael Mayer unveils a new production, starring Angel Blue in the title role, alongside Judit Kutasi, Piotr Beczala, and Quinn Kelsey, conducted by Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

Program Note

After the 1867 premiere in Paris of Verdi's *Don Carlos*, Camille du Locle, the composer's Parisian friend and co-librettist for that opera, persisted in attempts to further collaborate with the most famous opera composer in the world at the time. The two struck up a correspondence after du Locle's return from a trip to Egypt: "a land," wrote Verdi, "which once possessed a grandeur and a civilization which I could never bring myself to admire." How ironic that he would, not long after, embark on one of the most notable artistic monuments of 19th-century "Egyptomania," the fad for all things Egyptian that followed Napoleon's expeditions in 1797–1801 and the subsequent magnificent archaeological discoveries.

The process that led to *Aida* began with the Khedive of Egypt, Ismail Pasha, known as Ismail the Magnificent, who stated in 1879 (the same year in which he was toppled from power by the British), "My country is no longer in Africa; we are now part of Europe." As part of the festivities marking the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the Khedive invited Verdi to compose a celebratory ode, but the composer declined: He had no desire to write *pièces d'occasion*. Determined to secure a new work by Verdi, the Khedive then offered a much more attractive commission—a new opera for Cairo's extravagant new opera house, for which the composer was offered unlimited rehearsal time whenever he wished. When Verdi learned that Wagner might be offered the project should the great Italian composer continue to be obdurate, he capitulated almost immediately. A shrewd businessman who recognized the value of having a ruler so desirous of his services, Verdi requested—and received—a fee four times what he was paid for *Don Carlos*.

It was du Locle who brought to Verdi's attention the scenario that eventually became *Aida*, but if he had hoped for a French-language, Parisian version of the opera, his hopes were dashed by the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, which threw the French capital into chaos. Verdi also encountered the usual complications attendant on completing a libretto with sufficient specimens of "parola scenica" (a term he invented in a letter to his Italian librettist Antonio Ghislanzoni in 1870 to describe words and phrases that leap off the page in moments of heightened drama, such as "Ritorna vincitor!"), and casting the La Scala and Cairo premieres proved troublesome, as well. Finally, with all the complexities resolved, *Aida* received its world premiere in Cairo on December 24, 1871, and its European premiere in Milan on February 8, 1872. The La Scala performance—Verdi cared more about this one—was a huge success with the public, but the critics were less happy with the musical mixture of "the modern school" (influences from Wagner, Meyerbeer, and Gounod) and traditional Italian traits than they had been with *Don Carlos*. Verdi, worried about critical reaction, wrote to his friend Clarina Maffei with regard to the fourth production of the opera in Padua:

The success of *Aida*, as you know, was outspoken and decisive, untainted by *ifs* and *buts* and such unkind phrases as *Wagnerism*, the *Future*, the *Art of Melody*, etc., etc. The audience surrendered to its feelings and applauded. That's all!

Verdi himself conducted the first Parisian performance on March 22, 1880, and this time, it was an unqualified success with public and press alike. Sometimes it takes a few years, or more than a few, to bring a work into proper focus.

That Verdi accepted the Khedive's commission is both somewhat surprising—in light of his characteristic demands for original, even experimental theatrical works—and typical: It was not unknown for him to be drawn to simpler, more old-fashioned plots in the wake of radical endeavors. The love triangle of Idamante, Ilia, and Elettra in Mozart's *Idomeneo* some 90 years earlier is a predecessor for Radamès, Aida, and Amneris in *Aida*; Verdi described the plot as "not entirely new," its outline simple and straightforward. What attracted him was the sheer theatricality of the story, among other things, including the possibilities of new and exotic orchestral colors. The more limited orchestras of earlier 19th-century Italian opera had long since been replaced by immense ensembles—in this case, including six "Egyptian" trumpets (actually Roman-made), a military banda (every town had its brass band for public occasions, and they are an enduring part of Verdi's orchestras), and an underground ensemble of four trumpets, four trombones, and bass drum for the tomb scene. The distinctive coloration of this opera begins with the first ultra-soft, muted violin sounds at the start of the prelude; this sort of atmospheric approach, beginning and ending softly, with richer, fuller sonorities in the middle, was fashionable at the time, but Verdi's canonic workings and radical harmonies are his own. We hear an initial theme—a rising fragment ending with a "sighing figure"—that is associated throughout the opera with the heroine Aida and love first repressed, then admitted, followed by a more menacing descending theme treated in counterpoint and associated with the priests of Fthà, or Ptah, the creator god and demiurge who existed before all other things in Egyptian mythology. (We hear Aida's theme memorably in Act III played by the flutes, a high sustained tone in the violins, and cellos sotto voce, as she is waiting for Radamès outside the temple.) Other equally memorable orchestral sounds are to be found in abundance—for example, the translucent tapestry of strings at the start of Act III, with the note G played in various ways (pizzicato, muted, tremolando, distributed across four octaves in the first violins in swaying fashion). The result is a texture of incomparable delicacy, mystery, and beauty—of nocturnal stillness that is nonetheless vibrant with quivering life.

But this, of course, is an Italian opera, in which voices reign supreme. Verdi's publisher Ricordi describes *Aida* as being around 20 years old, of "a loving nature," with "meekness and gentleness" her chief characteristics. This loving nature has musical heights and depths; we hear despair, longing, and ardor with a huge vocal wingspan in "Ritorna vincitor!" and plaintive homesickness in "O patria mia," her Act III romanza. "Oh my homeland, I will never see you again!" she sings before and after each verse, the line often splitting into expressive fragments. Her father, Amonasro, capable of lyricism when he is persuading Aida to do his bidding, shows his true colors when he bursts forth in anger against the Egyptians. "Just as a man in a towering rage

oversteps all the bounds of order, moderation, and propriety and forgets himself completely, so should the music likewise forget itself," Mozart said of Osmin's music in his *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and the same is true of Amonasro. Radamès is given sufficient tenor heroics to satisfy any operagoer, until he realizes in Act III that he has betrayed his country. The lyrical sweetness of his part in the death duet at the opera's conclusion is a new vein of pathos for him. The mezzo-soprano Amneris is by far the most complex of the major characters. She genuinely loves Radamès, but she is a master of dissimulation, accustomed to power, and determined to humiliate Aida; the melody associated with her tends to appear in the orchestra, with the vocal line ("parlante melodico," or "melodious speech") grafted onto it. But when she pleads with Radamès in Act IV ("Ah! Tu dei vivere"), Verdi gives her some of the most anguished, majestic, and beautiful melody ever written for a mezzo, culminating in a plea to the gods for mercy ("Numi, pietà"—words Aida had sung earlier) couched as gasping, sobbing fragments. Ramfis is among the most powerful of all the priests, hermits, and prophets sprinkled throughout Verdi's operas, and he is an especially unyielding and bloodthirsty specimen of the type. In the judgment scene of Act IV, he and his priests sing a version of plainchant-like melody—not to be found in any liturgy—of Verdi's invention, and he is often accompanied by the orchestra's version of sounds from the crypt.

This opera was Verdi's hail and farewell to the French-derived Italianate version of grand opera, based on history (or imagined history) and filled with huge ceremonial scenes, large crowds, massed forces of many kinds. The second scene in Act I, with its invocations of Ptah to melodies made to sound non-Western (a kind of exotic wailing); the dances for Moorish slaves and for the temple priestesses; the massing of male chorus, female chorus, banda, soloists, and the entire orchestra for the triumphal scene of Act II: These are guaranteed to wow the spectator. But Verdi has a heartbreaking habit in his late tragedies of pulling the camera away from the gigantic and the public to focus instead on the most intimate matters of love and death, and he does so here. The work's final moments, with the chorus above the tomb chanting "Immenso Fthà" and Amneris pleading in anguished monotone for Radamès's soul, are like none other in operatic history.

—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.

The Creative Team



Yannick Nézet-Séguin

CONDUCTOR (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Aida*, Jeanine Tesori's *Grounded*, *Tosca*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *La Bohème*, 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.



Michael Mayer

DIRECTOR (BETHESDA, MARYLAND)

THIS SEASON *Aida* and Jeanine Tesori's *Grounded* at the Met and *Swept Away* on Broadway.

MET PRODUCTIONS *La Traviata*, Nico Muhly's *Marnie*, and *Rigoletto* (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Among his numerous accolades are Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Awards for *Spring Awakening* and Tony nominations for *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (for which he also won a Drama Desk Award), *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and *A View from the Bridge*. Additional Broadway credits include *A Beautiful Noise: The Neil Diamond Musical*, *Funny Girl*, *Burn This*, *Head Over Heels*, *Everyday Rapture*, *American Idiot* (Drama Desk Award), and *Side Man* (Drama Desk Award), among many others. His Off-Broadway credits include *Little Shop of Horrors* (Westside Theatre), *Love, Love, Love* (Roundabout Theatre Company), *Brooklynite* (Vineyard Theatre), *Whorl Inside a Loop* (with Dick Scanlan, Second Stage Theater), and *10 Million Miles* (Atlantic Theater Company). His work on screen includes the films *Single All the Way*, *The Seagull*, *Flicka*, and *A Home at the End of the World* and the television series *Smash* and *Alpha House*.



Christine Jones

SET DESIGNER (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON *Aida* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto* (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She is the creator and artistic director of Theatre for One. Among her numerous accolades are Tony and Olivier Awards for

The Creative Team CONTINUED

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, a Tony Award for *American Idiot*, *Time Out's* Best Experience for *SOCIAL! the social distance dance club* (which she conceived), a Drama Desk Award for *Queen of the Night* (which she directed), and an Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Set Design. Additional Broadway credits include *The Outsiders*, *Macbeth*, *Birthday Candles*, *The Cher Show*, *Old Times*, *Spring Awakening*, and *The Green Bird*. In the West End, she has designed productions of *Let the Right One In* and *Spring Awakening*. Her operatic credits include Laurent Petitgirard's *John Merrick*, *The Elephant Man* at Minnesota Opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor* at New York City Opera, and *Giulio Cesare* at Houston Grand Opera. Her work has also appeared at BAM, Shakespeare in the Park, New York Theatre Workshop, and Signature Theatre, among many others. Currently, she is adapting and co-directing *Hamlet Hail to the Thief* in collaboration with Steven Hoggett and Radiohead's Thom Yorke, is an artist-in-residence at Park Avenue Armory, and is a faculty member at New York University.



Susan Hilferty

COSTUME DESIGNER (ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS)

THIS SEASON *Aida* at the Met and *Swept Away* on Broadway.

MET PRODUCTIONS *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto* (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She has designed more than 400 productions around the globe. She received Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Awards and an Olivier Award nomination for the original production of *Wicked* currently running on Broadway. Additional Broadway credits include *Parade* (Tony Award nomination), *Funny Girl*, *Present Laughter* (Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations), *Hands on a Hardbody*, *Annie*, *Spring Awakening* (Tony Award nomination), *Lestat* (Tony Award nomination), *Assassins*, and *Into the Woods* (Hewes Design Award; Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations), among many others. Her operatic credits include *Manon* at LA Opera and Staatsoper Berlin, *La Finta Giardiniera* at Washington National Opera and the Glimmerglass Festival, and *Káťa Kabanová* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. She has also designed for Taylor Swift's *Speak Now World Tour*, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Her many awards include three Lifetime Achievement Awards, an Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Design, the Ruth Morley Design Award from the League of Professional Theatre Women, and the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Set Design.



Kevin Adams

LIGHTING DESIGNER (PANHANDLE, TEXAS)

THIS SEASON *Aida* and Jeanine Tesori's *Grounded* at the Met and *Swept Away* on Broadway.

MET PRODUCTIONS *La Traviata*, Nico Muhly's *Marnie*, *L'Amour de Loin*, and *Rigoletto* (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has received Tony Awards for his work on *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *American Idiot*, *The 39 Steps* (for which he also won a Drama Desk Award), and *Spring Awakening*. Other Broadway credits include *A Beautiful Noise: The Neil Diamond Musical*, *Funny Girl*, *The Cher Show*, *Head Over Heels*, *SpongeBob Squarepants*, *The Terms of My Surrender*, *Hands on a Hardbody*, *Next to Normal*, *Man and Boy*, and *Hair*, among many others, as well as solo shows for

John Leguizamo and Eve Ensler. He designed the world premiere of *Marnie* at English National Opera, and his work has also appeared Off-Broadway and at the Kennedy Center, Glimmerglass Festival, New York City Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Washington National Opera, and in the HBO film *Mildred Pierce*. He is the recipient of numerous honors, including Obie, Lucille Lortel, and Outer Critics Circle Awards.

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PROJECTION DESIGN

THIS SEASON *Aida* at the Met and *Stranger Things: The First Shadow* on Broadway.

MET PRODUCTIONS Nico Muhly's *Marnie* and *Two Boys*, the *50 Years at Lincoln Center* gala, *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, *The Enchanted Island*, John Adams's *Doctor Atomic*, the 125th Anniversary Gala, and Philip Glass's *Satyagraha* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS They have received Tony and Olivier Awards for their work integrating animation, film, and video into live performance and real-world environments. Recent operatic credits include *Satyagraha* at LA Opera; Mason Bates's *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* at Seattle Opera; *Two Boys*, Glass's *The Perfect American*, and the world premiere of Julian Anderson's *Thebans* at English National Opera; the world premieres of Georg Friedrich Haas's *Morgen und Abend* and Birtwistle's *The Minotaur* at Covent Garden; Nono's *Al Gran Sole Carico d'Amore* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and Salzburg Festival; and the world premiere of Muhly's *Dark Sisters* at Gotham Chamber Opera. Their work has also appeared on Broadway, in the West End, in exhibitions at London's Lightroom, and at the Edinburgh International Festival, London's National Theatre and Royal Ballet, Manchester International Festival, and Berlin's Schaubühne, among many others. They served as video designers for the opening ceremonies of the 2012 Summer Olympics in London.

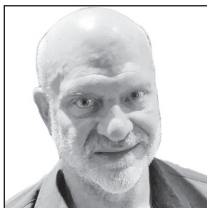


Oleg Glushkov

CHOREOGRAPHER (OMSK, RUSSIA)

THIS SEASON *Aida* for his debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS A theater educator, choreographer, and director, he graduated from the Russian Institute of Theatre Arts (GITIS) in 2002 as a choreographer and began working with renowned theaters, including Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre, the Moscow Art Theatre, the Vakhtangov State Academic Theatre, Lenkom Theatre, Moscow Sovremennik Theatre, the Norwegian National Opera, the National Theatre of Norway, and the Düsseldorf Schauspielhaus, among others. He has choreographed numerous films and is a recipient of prestigious theater and film awards. Since 2002, he has also been teaching at GITIS and the Moscow Art Theatre School.



Stephen Pickover

PRODUCTION CONSULTANT (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON *Aida* at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has served with the Met's stage-directing staff since 1983, assisting on dozens of productions by many of the world's leading directors. He has also directed numerous operas, musicals, and

The Creative Team CONTINUED

plays in the United States and abroad, including at the Teatro Regio di Torino, Pittsburgh Opera, LA Opera, Houston Grand Opera, English National Opera, and with the San Francisco Symphony and Minnesota Orchestra. He was artistic director of the Riverside Opera Ensemble, where he conceived and directed *Where or When*, a new Rodgers and Hart Off-Broadway revue, produced by Maryellen Kernaghan. He developed and directed the new musical *Street Sense* by Migdalia Cruz and Linda Eisenstein at Cleveland Public Theatre and was artistic director of Pennsylvania's Struthers Library Theatre, a 1000-seat historic professional theater where he directed *Evita*, *The Sound of Music*, *A Day in Hollywood / A Night in the Ukraine*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Oklahoma!*, *The Boyfriend*, *Camelot*, *The Music Man*, and *The Fantasticks*.

The Cast IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER



Piotr Beczała

TENOR (CZECHOWICE-DZIEDZICE, POLAND)

THIS SEASON Radamès in *Aida* at the Met, Gustavo III in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Muscat, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* and Manrico in *Il Trovatore* at the Vienna State Opera, Don José in *Carmen* and the title role of *Lohengrin* at the Bavarian State Opera, Lohengrin in Zurich and at the Bayreuth Festival, the Prince in *Rusalka* in Barcelona, the title role of *Andrea Chénier* and Alfredo in *La Traviata* in concert at the Salzburg Festival, Don José in Verona, and concerts and recitals throughout Europe and the United States.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 2006 debut as the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, he has sung more than 150 performances of 15 roles, including Don José, Lohengrin, Loris Ipanoff in *Fedora*, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin*, Maurizio in *Adriana Lecouvreur*, Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* and *La Bohème*, Gustavo III, Vaudémont in *Iolanta*, the Prince, and the title role of *Faust*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has appeared with most of the world's leading opera companies, including Covent Garden, the Paris Opera, Polish National Opera, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Staatsoper Berlin, La Scala, San Francisco Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago, among many others.



Dmitry Belosselskiy

BASS (PAVLOHRAD, UKRAINE)

THIS SEASON Ramfis in *Aida* at the Met, Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* at Covent Garden, the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlo* at the Bavarian State Opera, Shostakovich's Symphony No. 13 with the Orchestre National de Lille, and the Old Convict in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in concert and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 14 at the Shostakovich Festival Leipzig.

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

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is a guest soloist at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, where his roles have included Filippo II in *Don Carlo*, King Heinrich in *Lohengrin*, the title role of *Boris Godunov*, Méphistophélès in *La Damnation de Faust*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Zaccaria, King René in *Iolanta*,

and Malyuta Skuratov in *The Tsar's Bride*. He has also appeared at the Bayreuth Festival, Vienna State Opera, Paris Opera, Dutch National Opera, Salzburg Festival, La Scala, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and in Palermo, Madrid, Turin, Rome, Verona, Barcelona, Bologna, Florence, Frankfurt, and Orange, among others.



Angel Blue

SOPRANO (LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Aida* and Margarita Xirgu in Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* at the Met, Bernstein's Symphony No. 1 with the Met Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the Houston Symphony, Mimi in *La Bohème* at the Bavarian State Opera, Strauss's *Vier Letzte Lieder* with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, the title role of *Luisa Miller* with Washington Concert Opera, *Aida* in concert with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and concerts at the Royal Albert Hall, Carnegie Hall, LA Opera, Kölner Philharmonie, and Théâtre des Champs-Élysées.

MET APPEARANCES Magda in *La Rondine*, Liù in *Turandot*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, Bess in *Porgy and Bess*, Destiny/Loneliness/Greta in Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, and Musetta and Mimi (debut, 2017) in *La Bohème*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the title role of *Tosca* at Covent Garden, the Vienna State Opera, the Santa Fe Opera, and LA Opera; Leonora in *Il Trovatore* at San Francisco Opera; *Aida* at Covent Garden and in concert at Detroit Opera; and Violetta at Houston Grand Opera. She was the 2020 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman.



Quinn Kelsey

BARITONE (HONOLULU, HAWAII)

THIS SEASON Amonasro in *Aida*, the title role of *Rigoletto*, and Scarpia in *Tosca* at the Met; Germont in *La Traviata* at the Seiji Ozawa Music Academy; and *Rigoletto* in Zurich and at LA Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Count Anckarström in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Marcello and Schaunard (debut, 2008) in *La Bohème*, Amonasro, the title role and Monterone in *Rigoletto*, Germont, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, and Peter in *Hansel and Gretel*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Guido di Monforte in *I Vespri Siciliani* in Zurich, Filippo Maria Visconti in Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* at the Paris Opera, *Rigoletto* in Madrid, the title role of *Simon Boccanegra* at Opera Philadelphia, and the title role of *Macbeth* at the Canadian Opera Company. He has also sung Don Carlo in *Ernani* 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 at Cincinnati Opera and Opera Philadelphia, *Rigoletto* at the Vienna State Opera, and the Duke of Nottingham in *Roberto Devereux* at LA Opera. He was the 2015 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman.



Judit Kutasi

MEZZO-SOPRANO (TIMIȘOARA, ROMANIA)

THIS SEASON Amneris in *Aida* at the Met and Deutsche Oper Berlin, Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at San Francisco Opera, Verdi's Requiem with the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Princess of Bouillon in *Adriana*

Lecouvreur in Toulouse.

MET APPEARANCES Preziosilla in *La Forza del Destino* (debut, 2024).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Between 2014 and 2016, she was a member of the ensemble at the Zurich Opera, having previously been a member of the company's International Opera Studio. She maintains a close relationship with the Deutsche Oper Berlin, where her roles have included Laura and La Cieca in *La Gioconda*, Waltraute in *Die Walküre*, Erda in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried*, Ulrica, Preziosilla, Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Maddalena and Giovanna in *Rigoletto*, and Fenena in *Nabucco*. She has also appeared at the Royal Danish Opera, Salzburg Easter Festival, Hungarian State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Paris Opera, La Scala, Israeli Opera, Edinburgh International Festival, and in Hamburg, Las Palmas, Barcelona, Verona, Genoa, Oviedo, Rome, Geneva, Modena, and Palermo, among others.



Morris Robinson

BASS (ATLANTA, GEORGIA)

THIS SEASON The King and Ramfis in *Aida* at the Met, Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* at Houston Grand Opera, Ramfis at Boston Lyric Opera, Banquo in *Macbeth* at the Atlanta Opera, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* at Cincinnati Opera, and concerts with the National Symphony Orchestra

and Boston Symphony Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 2002 debut as the Second Prisoner in *Fidelio*, he has sung more than 100 performances of ten roles, including Sarastro in *The Magic Flute* and *Die Zauberflöte*, the King, Ferrando, and Reinmar in *Tannhäuser*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Timur in *Turandot* and Lodovico in *Otello* at LA Opera, the Commander in the world premiere of Jeanine Tesori's *Grounded* at Washington National Opera, Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Santa Fe Opera, and Ramfis at Fort Worth Opera and Tulsa Opera. He has also sung Ramfis at Cincinnati Opera, LA Opera, and in concert at Detroit Opera; King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* at Seattle Opera; Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* in concert with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra; and Nourabad in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at the Dallas Opera. He is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.