

VINCENZO BELLINI

NORMA

CONDUCTOR
Carlo Rizzi

PRODUCTION
Sir David McVicar

SET DESIGNER
Robert Jones

COSTUME DESIGNER
Moritz Junge

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Paule Constable

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR
Leah Hausman

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR EMERITUS
James Levine

MUSIC DIRECTOR DESIGNATE
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in two acts

Libretto by Felice Romani, based on the
verse tragedy by Alexandre Soumet

Saturday, October 7, 2017
1:00–4:05PM

New Production

The production of *Norma* was made possible
by a generous gift from **Veronica Atkins**

The Metropolitan Opera

2017-18 SEASON

The 160th Metropolitan Opera performance of
VINCENZO BELLINI'S

NORMA

CONDUCTOR
Carlo Rizzi

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

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AND FATHER OF NORMA
Matthew Rose

POLLIONE, ROMAN PROCONSUL
IN GAUL
Joseph Calleja

FLAVIO, A CENTURION
Adam Diegel

NORMA, HIGH PRIESTESS OF
THE DRUIDS
Sondra Radvanovsky*

ADALGISA, A NOVICE PRIESTESS
Joyce DiDonato

CLOTILDE, NURSEMAID TO
NORMA'S CHILDREN
Michelle Bradley**

NORMA'S CHILDREN
Christopher Reynolds
John Reynolds

Saturday, October 7, 2017, 1:00-4:05PM

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Synopsis

Act I

Gaul, 50 B.C.E. In a forest at night, Oroveso, chief of the Sicambri, leads the druids and warriors in a prayer for revenge against the conquering Romans. After they have left, the Roman proconsul Pollione admits to his friend Flavio that he no longer loves the high priestess Norma, Oroveso's daughter, with whom he has two children. He has fallen in love with a young novice priestess, Adalgisa, who returns his love. Flavio warns him against Norma's anger. The druids assemble, and Norma prays to the moon goddess for peace. She tells her people that as soon as the moment for their uprising against the conquerors arrives, she herself will lead the revolt. At the same time, she realizes that she could never harm Pollione. When the grove is deserted, Adalgisa appears and asks for strength to resist Pollione. He finds her crying and urges her to flee with him to Rome. She agrees to renounce her vows.

In her dwelling, Norma tells her confidante Clotilde that Pollione has been called back to Rome. She is afraid that he will desert her and their children. Adalgisa arrives and confesses to Norma that she has a lover. Recalling the beginning of her own love affair, Norma decides to release Adalgisa from her vows and asks for the name of her lover. As Pollione appears, Adalgisa answers truthfully. Norma's kindness turns to fury. She tells Adalgisa about her own betrayal by the Roman soldier. Pollione confesses his love for Adalgisa and asks her again to come away with him, but she refuses and declares that she would rather die than steal him from Norma.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 2:30 PM)

Act II

Norma, dagger in hand, tries to bring herself to murder her children in their sleep to protect them from living disgracefully without a father. She cannot and instead summons Adalgisa, begging her to marry Pollione and take the children to Rome. Adalgisa refuses: She will go to Pollione but only to persuade him to return to Norma. Overcome by emotion, Norma embraces her, and the women reaffirm their friendship.

The warriors assemble in the forest to hear Oroveso's announcement that a new commander will replace Pollione. Oroveso rages against the Roman oppression but tells them that they must be patient to ensure the success of the eventual revolt.

Norma is stunned to hear from Clotilde that Adalgisa's pleas have not persuaded Pollione to return to her, and, in a rage, she urges her people to attack the

conquerors. Oroveso demands a sacrificial victim. Just then, Pollione is brought in, having profaned the druids' sanctuary. Alone with him, Norma promises him his freedom if he will give up Adalgisa for her. When he refuses, Norma threatens to kill their children and Adalgisa to punish him. But when she calls in the druids and tells them that a guilty priestess must die, she confesses that she is referring to herself. Moved by her nobility, Pollione asks to share her fate. Norma begs Oroveso to watch over her children, then leads her lover to the pyre.

Vincenzo Bellini

Norma

Premiere: Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 1831

Norma is an extraordinary fusion of sublime melody, vocal challenge, and dramatic power. It examines an ageless and archetypal situation: A powerful woman compromises her ideals for love, only to find herself betrayed by her lover. But this is only one aspect of her dilemma. Equally gripping is her relationship with the younger woman who is the new object of her former lover's attention and in whom *Norma* sees both a rival and a second self. The title role demands dramatic vocal power combined with the agility and technique of a coloratura singer. It is a daunting challenge to which few can rise; those who have are part of operatic lore.

The Creators

Vincenzo Bellini (1801–1835) was a Sicilian composer whose greatest gift was his extraordinary understanding of the human voice. His premature death at the age of 33, shortly after his opera *I Puritani* triumphed in its Parisian premiere, cut his meteoric career tragically short. Felice Romani (1788–1865) was the official librettist of Milan's Teatro alla Scala. A frequent collaborator of Bellini's, he worked with the composer on seven operas and also wrote the libretti for Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Anna Bolena*, among many other works. Romani even suggested French poet and dramatist Alexandre Soumet's (1788–1845) tragedy *Norma*, which had been performed at Paris's Théâtre de l'Odéon in April 1831, to Bellini as potential source material for an opera.

The Setting

The opera is set in Gaul at the beginning of its occupation by the Roman Empire. It is interesting that the Romans, long depicted in European culture as a civilizing force, are here seen as corrupt and exploitative.

The Music

Norma is perhaps the archetypal bel canto (from the Italian for "beautiful singing") opera, a style of singing that flourished in Italy in the 18th and early-19th centuries. Its principal features are beauty of tone, legato phrasing, and the delivery of florid ornamentation. Throughout the score, Bellini punctuates breathtaking melody with sharp moments of raw drama. The primary functions of the clear orchestral writing are to move the drama along with vigorous rhythm and to imbue certain moments with feeling and emotion, such as the superb

flute accompaniment to the soprano's Act I aria "Casta diva." The drama of *Norma*, however, is embedded in the nuances of the vocal parts as in few other operas. A note held in one phrase or swelled in another, a snippet flung out with extra edge—these are the kinds of details that create legendary performances of *Norma*. While such fine points are important in the solos, such as the tenor's Act I "Meco all'altar di Venere" and especially in "Casta diva," the details of vocalism become even more crucial in the several ensembles. These include the stirring trio in the finale to Act I and the soprano/mezzo Act II duet "Mira, o Norma." The blending—and contrast—of the voices, as the two women begin in confrontation and end in unity and friendship, is an astounding example of how much drama can be communicated through singing.

Met History

Norma entered the Met repertory (in German) in 1890, with Wagner specialist Lilli Lehmann in the title role. The opera fell out of the repertory after 1892 until Tullio Serafin conducted a new production, designed by Joseph Urban, in 1927. American soprano Rosa Ponselle sang the title role (which she repeated 28 times throughout the following four seasons) opposite tenor Giacomo Lauri-Volpi and bass Ezio Pinza. Zinka Milanov performed the role 16 times between 1943 and 1954. Maria Callas sang five performances of *Norma* in 1956, including her Met debut, which also featured Fedora Barbieri, Mario Del Monaco, and Cesare Siepi, with Fausto Cleva conducting. A young James McCracken sang the second tenor role of Flavio in these performances. In 1970, a new production premiered with Richard Bonyngé conducting Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne in her Met debut, and Carlo Bergonzi. (Sutherland and Horne sang in this opera 27 and 25 times respectively, all in the year 1970.) Later interpreters of the immortal priestess include Montserrat Caballé (11 performances between 1973 and 1976) and Renata Scotto (14 performances in 1981 and 1982). A production directed by John Copley and designed by John Conklin arrived in 2001, with Carlo Rizzi conducting Jane Eaglen, Dolora Zajick, and Richard Margison. Rizzi also conducted the 2017–18 Opening Night premiere of Sir David McVicar's new production, leading a cast that included Sondra Radvanovsky, Joyce DiDonato, Joseph Calleja, and Matthew Rose—and marking only the third time in the company's history that *Norma* has opened the Met's season.

Program Note

Vincenzo Bellini has long been underappreciated and misunderstood. Though everyone agrees that his operas *La Sonnambula*, *Norma*, and *I Puritani* feature lovely tunes, some critics and operagoers have accused his music of lacking vigor, like a pleasant but banal watercolor. This attitude is further inflamed, intentionally or not, by remarks like W. H. Auden's "No gentleman can fail to admire Bellini," or Heinrich Heine's catty description of the composer (whom he knew in Paris) as "a sigh in dancing pumps."

While it is true that no one wrote superbly lyrical, long-breathed melodies like Bellini, the fact is that these melodies, in addition to being beautiful, perfectly communicate the text and emotion at that precise moment in the opera—not to mention that there is plenty of fire and brimstone in his music when *that* is appropriate. For Bellini, only one thing was important: conveying the drama through the music, which for him meant through the voice. "Engrave on your mind in indelible letters: In opera, it is the singing that moves to tears, that arouses terror, that inspires death," he told a librettist. "Simplicity is the keynote ... if the heart is moved, then one can't go wrong."

This is nowhere more true than in *Norma*, an opera that provides sopranos with a role that can be considered an artistic Mount Everest. The formidable Lilli Lehmann, who sang the title role for the work's Met premiere in 1890, flatly declared that *Norma* was more demanding than singing all three Brünnhilde roles—in Wagner's *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*—which she sang often with the company.

Wagner, who was not given to praising Italian opera, admired Bellini and *Norma* to the point of choosing the opera for his benefit performance in Riga in 1837. "[Bellini's] music is all heart, closely, intimately linked to the words. ... Of all [his] creations, *Norma* is the one which unites the richest flow of melody with the deepest glow of truth: a great score that speaks to the heart, a work of genius."

Bellini first met his librettist for *Norma*, Felice Romani, in 1827, when the 26-year-old composer traveled from Naples to Milan, where he had a contract to write an opera for La Scala. Throughout his life, Bellini seemed to have an instinct for people, and he understood that Romani's libretti would fit his music perfectly. Eventually, Romani would supply words for seven of Bellini's ten operas, and though he also wrote for Rossini, Donizetti, and Verdi, among other composers, his work for Bellini is his very best.

"I am neither a classicist nor a romantic," Romani said. "I love the beautiful, wherever it is to be found. I do not like the intransigence of the classicists, but neither do I like the extreme lack of restraint of the ultra-romantics." The way he turned Alexandre Soumet's rather violent five-act melodrama *Norma* into a profound tragedy confirms Romani's credo.

Soumet's play opened at the Théâtre de l'Odéon in Paris on April 16, 1831, and was a tremendous success with the public, though somewhat less so with the critics. No one knows who first suggested it would make a good opera, but in a

letter dated June 23 of that year, Bellini mentions it as the subject for his new opera. Romani had his work cut out for him but managed to complete the libretto by the end of August.

In the play, Norma goes mad, slays one of her two children, then takes the other and jumps off a cliff, killing them both. Romani spares the children's lives, using them to reconcile Norma with her father before she voluntarily sacrifices herself to atone for breaking her vows. Romani also transplanted the action to a pre-Christian era and made Oroveso Norma's father in addition to a druid chieftain, thereby adding poignancy to the final scene. He added considerable detail to the religious rites of the druids, the highlight of which is Norma's cutting of the sacred mistletoe, which leads to her famous aria "Casta diva." In the play, Norma's two children relate to their mother a dream they have had about a wedding in Rome. In the opera, the dream is given to Pollione for his first act aria "Meco all'altar di Venere," in which it becomes a foreshadowing of the tragedy that later unfolds. Pollione changes over the course of the opera from something of a cad into a chastened, repentant man, and Adalgisa, who might have been just "the other, younger woman," is a more complex figure, torn between her love for Pollione and her religious vows and affection for Norma.

It is the character of Norma, however, around whom everyone, and everything, revolves. The role is, in the words of conductor and musicologist Will Crutchfield, "a dramatic part that spans political authority, religious charisma, sororal generosity, murderous depression, and eventual transcendence and self-sacrifice"—every bit of which is reflected in Bellini's music. He labored over the score, often rewriting pieces several times. He rewrote "Casta diva," for example, eight times before he was satisfied. But legend has it that when he gave it to the famous soprano Giuditta Pasta, who was to create the role, she didn't like it. Bellini believed in the aria and suggested that she work on it every morning for a week. If, after that, she still didn't like it, he would rewrite it. By the end of the week, she had fallen in love with the aria and even sent the composer a gift as an apology for her initial criticism.

Besides Pasta, who was making her La Scala debut with *Norma*, the cast included Giulia Grisi (who would become a famous Norma) as Adalgisa, and Domenico Donzelli, a well-known tenor, as Pollione. Everyone assumed the first performance on December 26, 1831, would be another triumph for all concerned. Instead, it was a fiasco—a word Bellini repeated over and over in a letter to a friend describing the occasion. He blamed a rival composer, Giovanni Pacini, and his mistress, the Russian Countess Giulia Samoyloff (who was also an enemy of Pasta's), for inciting the claque against *Norma*.

While that might well have been true, there were other reasons the opening night audience was cool. The singers were not in good voice, having spent the morning rehearsing the second act. More importantly, much of the music for *Norma*—so familiar to our ears today—was innovative, and the public did not know what to make of it. For instance, the first act ends not with a large ensemble

number as tradition decreed, but with a trio, punctuated by off-stage chorus. And the opera's finale is not the brilliant cabaletta for soprano the audience was waiting for, but an extended number for all the principals, almost a hymn, that weaves together all the opera's dramatic elements into an overwhelming moment.

On repeated hearings, however, the public warmed to the opera and embraced it wholeheartedly. A Milanese paper that had been rather condescending after the premiere wrote after the fourth performance: "The piece was appreciated more and more each evening. ... *Norma's* music is declamatory; it fits intelligently to the words, and precisely because this music follows a road that has long been disused, our ears need a longer time to listen to it in order to judge it honestly. For this reason, part of the score didn't please us at the first hearing and met with universal approval after the passage of time."

Though *Norma* abounds with the thrilling arias and duets the public expected from Bellini, the critic was right in commenting that the music "fits intelligently to the words." Throughout the opera, Bellini was determined to convey the inner life of his characters, even if it meant jettisoning the expected operatic forms in favor of the drama. The climax of the opera occurs when Norma reveals to her people that a priestess has violated her vows and orders the sacrificial pyre be built. "Who is it?" the druids demand. "Son io" ("It is I"), Norma says. Most composers would have underscored Norma's revelation with a huge surge in the orchestra for the soprano to soar above, perhaps lavishly embellishing her music to emphasize the importance of the words. But Bellini was after the inner truth of the moment. He strips away the orchestra entirely, leaving Norma's voice as bare and exposed as the character is when she sings the word "io," moving from G at the top of the staff down a fifth to C. It is simple, honest, and, given the right soprano, utterly devastating. After absorbing the impact of that moment and the transcendent finale that follows, one can hardly disagree with Arthur Schopenhauer, who pronounced *Norma* "a tragedy of extreme perfection."

Bellini died just four years after *Norma's* premiere, six weeks shy of his 34th birthday. Had Puccini died at the same age, he would be virtually unknown today, the composer of only *Le Villi* and *Edgar*. Of Richard Strauss's operas, we would have only *Guntram*. From Wagner, nothing after *Tannhäuser*. Verdi would be remembered as the very promising composer who wrote *Nabucco*, *I Lombardi*, and *Ernani*, but there would be none of his greatest masterpieces. In the same time span, Bellini gave us three peaks of the repertoire: *La Sonnambula*, *I Puritani*, and, above all, *Norma*. Only Mozart and Rossini achieved so much in opera so quickly.

—Paul Thomason

Paul Thomason, who writes for numerous opera companies and symphony orchestras in the U.S. and abroad, has contributed to the Met's program books since 1999.

The Cast and Creative Team



Carlo Rizzi

CONDUCTOR (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Norma* and *Turandot* at the Met, *La Forza del Destino* and *Tosca* at Welsh National Opera, *Madama Butterfly* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* in Rome, and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Amsterdam.

MET APPEARANCES Nearly 200 performances since his 1993 debut conducting *La Bohème*, including *La Traviata*, *Tosca*, *Nabucco*, *Il Trovatore*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Aida*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Rigoletto*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is conductor laureate of Welsh National Opera, where he had two tenures as music director, 1992–2001 and 2004–08. Since launching his conducting career in 1982 with Donizetti's *L'Ajo nell'Imbarazzo*, he has led almost 100 different operas, a repertoire rich in both Italian works and the music of Wagner, Richard Strauss, Britten, and Janáček. He has conducted at La Scala, Covent Garden, the Paris Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and the Bavarian State Opera, among others. Recent performances include *Rigoletto* in Amsterdam, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Hindemith's *Sancta Susanna* at the Paris Opera, the world premiere of Iain Bell's *In Parenthesis* and *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* at Welsh National Opera, and Giordano's *La Cena delle Beffe* at La Scala.



Sir David McVicar

DIRECTOR (GLASGOW, SCOTLAND)

THIS SEASON *Norma* and *Tosca* at the Met, *Ariodante* at the Vienna State Opera, and Britten's *Gloriana* in Madrid.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Roberto Devereux*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Anna Bolena*, *Giulio Cesare*, and *Il Trovatore* (debut, 2009).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent productions include *Rigoletto* at the Savonlinna Opera Festival, *Falstaff* at the Vienna State Opera, *Wozzeck* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at the Glyndebourne Festival, *Les Troyens* at San Francisco Opera, and *Andrea Chénier* in Beijing. He has also directed *Andrea Chénier*, *Les Troyens*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Aida*, *Salome*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Faust*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Rigoletto* at Covent Garden; *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Carmen*, and *La Bohème* at the Glyndebourne Festival; *Rusalka*, *Elektra*, *Billy Budd*, and *Manon* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; *Alcina*, *Tosca*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *The Turn of the Screw*, and *Der Rosenkavalier* at English National Opera; *Faust* and *Don Giovanni* at Opera Australia; *Les Troyens* at La Scala; *Tristan und Isolde* at the Vienna State Opera and in Tokyo; *Don Giovanni*, *Agrippina*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Brussels; and the *Ring* cycle and *Così fan tutte* in Strasbourg; among many others.



Robert Jones

SET DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Norma* at the Met and Britten's *Gloriana* in Madrid.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Die Fledermaus*, *Giulio Cesare*, and *Anna Bolena* (debut, 2011).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has designed more than 30 West End and Broadway productions, including *City of Angels*, *Scenes from a Marriage*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, *The Secret Rapture*, *A Chorus of Disapproval*, *Noises Off*, *The Sound of Music* (also on tour), *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *On the Town*, and *Cyrano de Bergerac*. He is an associate of the Royal Shakespeare Company, where he has designed more than 15 productions, including *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. His opera credits includes *Don Giovanni* at Opera Australia, *Andrea Chénier* at Covent Garden and San Francisco Opera, *Don Carlo* in Frankfurt, *Tristan und Isolde* in Tokyo and at the Vienna State Opera, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* in Paris and Berlin, *L'Elisir d'Amore* at English National Opera, and *Giulio Cesare* at the Glyndebourne Festival, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and in Lille. He has designed many productions for London's National, Donmar, and Almeida Theatres and created the production design for the BBC/Royal Shakespeare Company film of *Hamlet*.



Moritz Junge

COSTUME DESIGNER (LONDON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Norma* at the Met, a world premiere by Alexei Ratmansky with American Ballet Theatre, and *Anna Bolena* in Karlsruhe, Germany.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Roberto Devereux*, and *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* (debut, 2015).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has designed sets and costumes for *Così fan tutte* (Opera Australia) and Thomas Adès's *Powder Her Face* (Theater Aachen), and costumes for Charles Wuorinen's *Brokeback Mountain* (Theater Aachen); *Les Troyens* (Covent Garden, San Francisco Opera, and La Scala); *Aida* and Adès's *The Tempest* (Covent Garden); *Don Carlo* (Bolshoi Opera); *Rusalka* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *L'Anatomie de la Sensation* (Paris Opera Ballet); numerous works for the Royal Ballet, including *Wolf Works*, *Live Fire Exercise*, *Limen*, *Infra* (also for the Joffrey Ballet and Mariinsky Ballet), and *Chroma* (also for Alvin Ailey, Royal Danish Ballet, and Bolshoi Ballet, among others); *Outlier* (New York City Ballet); *The Messiah* (English National Opera and Opera de Lyon); *Dyad 1929* (Australian Ballet); *Renature* (Nederlands Dans Theater); *La Cenerentola* (Glyndebourne Festival); *In the Republic of Happiness* (Royal Court); *The Kitchen*, *Dido*, *Queen of Carthage*, and *The Hour We Knew Nothing of Each Other* (National Theatre); *Judgment Day* (Almeida); and *All About My Mother* (Old Vic).



Paule Constable

LIGHTING DESIGNER (BRIGHTON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Norma* and *Così fan tutte* at the Met, Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* at Covent Garden, and *Ariodante* at the Vienna State Opera.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Roberto Devereux*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, *The Merry Widow*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Don Giovanni*, *Anna Bolena*, and *Satyagraha* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She has received Tony Awards for *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and *War Horse*, and Olivier Awards in the U.K. for *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and *His Dark Materials* at the National Theatre, Schiller's *Don Carlos* at London's Gielgud Theatre, and *The Chalk Garden* at the Donmar Warehouse. Additional lighting credits include *Wozzeck* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; *Follies* and *Angels in America* at the National Theatre; *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Rigoletto*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Macbeth* at Covent Garden; *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Billy Budd*, *Carmen*, *La Bohème*, and *Rusalka* at the Glyndebourne Festival; *Idomeneo*, *Satyagraha*, and Charpentier's *Medea* at English National Opera; *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Semele*, and *Agrippina* in Paris; the *Ring* cycle in Strasbourg; and *Tristan und Isolde* in Tokyo; among many others.



Leah Hausman

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR (COLUMBUS, OHIO)

THIS SEASON Movement director for *Norma* and *Tosca* at the Met, director for *Benvenuto Cellini* at the Paris Opera, and associate stage director for *The Rake's Progress* in Amsterdam.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Roberto Devereux*, *Maria Stuarda*, and *Il Trovatore* (debut, 2008).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She has choreographed for productions of *The Rake's Progress* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival; *Falstaff* at the Vienna State Opera; *La Damnation de Faust* at Staatsoper Berlin, English National Opera, and in Palermo; *Aida*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Elektra*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Rigoletto*, and *Il Turco in Italia* at Covent Garden; *Giovanna d'Arco* at La Scala; *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *The Miserly Knight*, *Gianni Schicchi*, and *La Bohème* at the Glyndebourne Festival; and *La Clemenza di Tito* at English National Opera, the Aix-en-Provence Festival, and in Copenhagen; among others. She has also served as co-director and choreographer for *Benvenuto Cellini* in Amsterdam, Barcelona, and at English National Opera; and associate director for *Les Troyens* at Covent Garden, La Scala, and San Francisco Opera. Her work for the theater includes *Romeo and Juliet* and *Twelfth Night* for the Royal Shakespeare Company, *Fortune's Fool* at the Old Vic, and *The Game of Love and Chance* for the National Theatre.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



Joyce DiDonato

MEZZO-SOPRANO (KANSAS CITY, KANSAS)

THIS SEASON Adalgisa in *Norma* and the title role of *Cendrillon* at the Met, the title role of *Semiramide* at Covent Garden, Sister Helen Prejean in Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* in Madrid and with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and concert appearances in Rotterdam, Berlin, London, and Kansas City.

MET APPEARANCES Elena in *La Donna del Lago*, the title roles of *La Cenerentola* and *Maria Stuarda*, Sycorax in *The Enchanted Island*, the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Isolier in *Le Comte Ory*, Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Stéphanie in *Roméo et Juliette*, and Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (debut, 2005).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include *Semiramide* at the Bavarian State Opera, Sesto in *La Clemenza di Tito* and Marguerite in *La Damnation de Faust* in concert in Baden-Baden, Charlotte in *Werther* at Covent Garden, Romeo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* at Deutsche Oper Berlin and in Zurich, Arden Scott in the world premiere of Jake Heggie's *Great Scott* at the Dallas Opera, and *Cendrillon* at Covent Garden, the Santa Fe Opera, and in Barcelona. She was the 2007 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leightman.



Sondra Radvanovsky

SOPRANO (BERWYN, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Norma* at the Met, Paolina in Donizetti's *Poliuto* and Maddalena in *Andrea Chénier* in Barcelona, Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and Leonora in *Il Trovatore* at the Paris Opera, and the title role of *Anna Bolena* with the Canadian Opera Company.

MET APPEARANCES Nearly 200 performances of 27 roles, including Elisabetta in *Roberto Devereux*, Anna Bolena, Amelia, Leonora, Elvira in *Ernani*, Roxane in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Countess Ceprano in *Rigoletto* (debut, 1996), and the title roles of *Maria Stuarda*, *Tosca*, and *Aida*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Amelia in Zurich; *Tosca* at LA Opera, the Bavarian State Opera, and Deutsche Oper Berlin; Amelia Grimaldi in *Simon Boccanegra* in Paris and Monte Carlo; *Norma* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Canadian Opera Company, Bavarian State Opera, San Francisco Opera, and in Barcelona; the title role of *Manon Lescaut* at Deutsche Oper Berlin; *Aida* at the Paris Opera and Vienna State Opera; *Anna Bolena* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Elisabetta with the Canadian Opera Company; and the title role of *Suor Angelica* at LA Opera.



Joseph Calleja

TENOR (ATTARD, MALTA)

THIS SEASON Pollione in *Norma* at the Met, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* at Covent Garden and the Bavarian State Opera, Federico in Cilea's *L'Arlesiana* in concert at Deutsche Oper Berlin, the title role of *Faust* in Monte Carlo, and Macduff in *Macbeth* and Faust in Boito's *Mefistofele* at the Bavarian State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES The Duke in *Rigoletto* (debut, 2006), Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra*, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Macduff, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, the title role of *Faust*, Hoffmann in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Jacopo Foscari in *I Due Foscari* at the Salzburg Festival; Cavaradossi at Grange Park Opera; Don José in *Carmen* at Lyric Opera of Chicago and in Frankfurt; Rodolfo at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Staatsoper Berlin, and Covent Garden; Pollione at Covent Garden; Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* at the Bavarian State Opera; Verdi's Requiem in Orange; Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Ruggero in *La Rondine* and Edgardo at Deutsche Oper Berlin; and the Duke at the Vienna State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Bavarian State Opera, Welsh National Opera, and in Amsterdam.



Matthew Rose

BASS (BRIGHTON, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON Oroveso in *Norma* and Colline in *La Bohème* at the Met, the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlo* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, and concert appearances in Philadelphia, London, and Rotterdam.

MET APPEARANCES Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette*, Leporello and Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, the Night Watchman in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Colline (debut, 2011), Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Talbot in *Maria Stuarda*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Hundung in *Die Walküre* in concert at the Edinburgh International Festival, Bottom at the Aldeburgh Festival and the Glyndebourne Festival, Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier* and Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Covent Garden, King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* at English National Opera, Baron Ochs at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Callistene in Donizetti's *Poliuto* and Collatinus in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* at the Glyndebourne Festival, and Jesus in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in Valencia. He has also sung Bottom at La Scala, Covent Garden, Houston Grand Opera, and in Lyon; Talbot, Timur in *Turandot*, and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* at Covent Garden; Henry VIII in *Anna Bolena* in Bordeaux; Leporello at Deutsche Oper Berlin; and Claggart in *Billy Budd* at English National Opera.

Facilities and Services

THE ARNOLD AND MARIE SCHWARTZ GALLERY MET

Art gallery located in the South Lobby featuring leading artists. Open Monday through Friday, 6pm through last intermission; Saturday, noon through last intermission of evening performances.



ASSISTIVE LISTENING SYSTEM AND BINOCULARS

Wireless headsets, which work with the FM assistive listening system to amplify sound, are available at the coat check station on the South Concourse level before performances. Binoculars are also available for rental at the coat check station on the South Concourse level. The rental cost is \$5. A major credit card or driver's license is required as deposit.



BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Large print programs are available free of charge from the ushers. Braille synopses of many operas are available free of charge. Please contact an usher. Tickets for no-view score desk seats may be purchased by calling the Metropolitan Opera Guild at 212-769-7028.



BOX OFFICE

Monday–Saturday, 10am–8pm; Sunday, noon–6pm. The Box Office closes at 8pm on non-performance evenings or on evenings with no intermission. Box Office Information: 212-362-6000.

CHECK ROOM

On Concourse level (Founders Hall).

FIRST AID

Doctor in attendance during performances; contact an usher for assistance.

LECTURE SERIES

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LOST AND FOUND

Security office at Stage Door. Monday–Friday, 2pm–4pm; 212-799-3100, ext. 2499.

MET OPERA SHOP

The Met Opera Shop is adjacent to the North Box Office, 212-580-4090. Open Monday–Saturday, 10am–final intermission; Sunday, noon–6pm.



PUBLIC TELEPHONES

Telephones with volume controls and TTY Public Telephone located in Founders Hall on the Concourse level.

RESTAURANT AND REFRESHMENT FACILITIES

The Grand Tier Restaurant features creative contemporary American cuisine, and the Revlon Bar offers panini, crostini, and a full service bar. Both are open two hours prior to the Met Opera curtain time to any Lincoln Center ticket holder for pre-curtain dining. Pre-ordered intermission dining is also available for Met ticket holders. For reservations please call 212-799-3400.



RESTROOMS

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SEAT CUSHIONS

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SCORE-DESK TICKET PROGRAM

Tickets for score desk seats in the Family Circle boxes may be purchased by calling the Met Opera Guild at 212-769-7028. These no-view seats provide an affordable way for music students to study an opera's score during a live performance.

TOUR GUIDE SERVICE

Backstage tours of the Opera House are held during the Met season on most weekdays at 3:15pm, and on select Sundays at 10:30am and/or 1:30pm. For tickets and information, call 212-769-7028. Tours of Lincoln Center daily; call 212-875-5351 for availability.

WEBSITE

www.metopera.org



WHEELCHAIR ACCOMMODATIONS

Telephone 212-799-3100, ext. 2204. Wheelchair entrance at Concourse level.

The exits indicated by a red light and the sign nearest the seat you occupy are the shortest routes to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run—walk to that exit.

In compliance with New York City Department of Health regulations, smoking is prohibited in all areas of this theater.

Patrons are reminded that in deference to the performing artists and the seated audience, those who leave the auditorium during the performance will not be readmitted while the performance is in progress.

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