

Gaetano Donizetti

Lucia di Lammermoor

CONDUCTOR

Marco Armiliato

PRODUCTION

Mary Zimmerman

SET DESIGNER

Daniel Ostling

COSTUME DESIGNER

Mara Blumenfeld

LIGHTING DESIGNER

T. J. Gerckens

CHOREOGRAPHER

Daniel Pelzig

GENERAL MANAGER

Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR

James Levine

Opera in three acts

Libretto by Salvatore Cammarano, based on
Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*

Saturday, February 7, 2009, 1:00–4:40pm

Last time this season

The production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*
is made possible by a generous gift from
The Sybil B. Harrington Endowment Fund.

The revival of this production is made possible
by a gift from Mizuho Corporate Bank, Ltd.

The Metropolitan Opera
2008–09 Season

The 580th Metropolitan Opera performance of

Gaetano Donizetti's

Lucia di Lammermoor

This performance is broadcast live over The Toll Brothers–Metropolitan Opera International Radio Network, sponsored by **Toll Brothers, America's luxury home builder®**, with generous long-term support from **The Annenberg Foundation** and the **Vincent A. Stabile Endowment for Broadcast Media**, and through contributions from **listeners worldwide**.

This performance is being broadcast live on Metropolitan Opera Radio on SIRIUS channel 78 and XM channel 79.

Conductor
Marco Armiliato

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Normanno
Michael Myers

Flute Solo
Stefán Ragnar Höskuldsson

Lord Enrico Ashton
Mariusz Kwiecien*

Harp Solo
Mariko Anraku

Raimondo
Ildar Abdrazakov

Armonica Solo
Cecilia Brauer

Lucia
Anna Netrebko

Alisa
Michaela Martens

Edgardo
Rolando Villazón

Arturo
Colin Lee

Saturday, February 7, 2009, 1:00–4:40pm

This afternoon's performance is being transmitted live in high definition to movie theaters worldwide. *The Met: Live in HD* series is made possible by a generous grant from the Neubauer Family Foundation.



Ken Howard / Metropolitan Opera

Anna Netrebko in the title role of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Assistants to the Set Designer **Meghan Raham and Brenda Sabatka-Davis**
Associate Costume Designer **Elissa Tatigikis Iberti**
Assistants to the Costume Designer **Meghan Raham and Meleokalani Ortiz**
Musical Preparation **Dennis Giauque, Jane Klaviter, Denise Massé, Joseph Colaneri, Bradley Moore, and Hemdi Kfir**
Assistant Stage Directors **Sarah Ina Meyers and Tomer Zvulun**
Stage Band Conductor **Jeffrey Goldberg**
Met Titles **Cori Ellison**
Prompter **Jane Klaviter**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume Department**
Wigs executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig Department**
Animals supervised by **All-Tame Animals, Inc.**

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

This production uses flash effects.

The second intermission for this performance is approximately 40 minutes, to allow sufficient time for the scene change.

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

Yamaha is the official piano of the Metropolitan Opera.

Latecomers will not be admitted during the performance.

* Graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program

Met Titles

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Synopsis

The Lammermoors, Scotland

Act I

SCENE 1 Outside Lammermoor Castle

SCENE 2 A fountain in the woods

Intermission

Act II

SCENE 1 Months later. The great hall of the castle, late morning

SCENE 2 The great hall of the castle, immediately after

Intermission

Act III

SCENE 1 That night. The ruins of Wolf's Crag Castle

SCENE 2 The ballroom of Lammermoor Castle

SCENE 3 The burial grounds of the Ravenswoods

In this production, the action takes place closer to the time of Donizetti's composition in the mid-19th century, rather than the original late-17th century setting of the novel.

Act I

Night. An intruder has been spotted on the grounds of Lammermoor Castle, home of Enrico Ashton. Normanno, the captain of the guard, sends Enrico's men off in search of the stranger. Enrico arrives, troubled. His family's fortunes are in danger, and only the arranged marriage of his sister, Lucia, with Lord Arturo can save them. The chaplain Raimondo, Lucia's tutor, reminds Enrico that the girl is still mourning the death of her mother. But Normanno reveals that Lucia is concealing a great love for Edgardo di Ravenswood, leader of the Ashtons' political enemies. Enrico is furious and swears vengeance. The men return and explain that they have seen and identified the intruder as Edgardo. Enrico's fury increases.

Just before dawn at a fountain in the woods nearby, Lucia and her companion Alisa are waiting for Edgardo. Lucia relates that, at the fountain, she has seen the ghost of a girl who was stabbed by her jealous lover ("Regnava nel silenzio"). Alisa urges her to leave Edgardo, but Lucia insists that her love for Edgardo brings her great joy and may overcome all. Edgardo arrives and explains that he must go to France on a political mission. Before he leaves he wants to make peace with Enrico. Lucia, however, asks Edgardo to keep their love a secret. Edgardo agrees, and they exchange rings and vows of devotion (Duet: "Verranno a te sull'aure").

Act II

Some months later, the day on which Lucia is to marry Arturo. Normanno assures Enrico that he has successfully intercepted all correspondence between the lovers and has in addition procured a forged letter, supposedly from Edgardo, that indicates he is involved with another woman. As the captain goes off to welcome the groom, Lucia enters, continuing to defy her brother. Enrico shows her the forged letter. Lucia is heartbroken, but Enrico insists that she marry Arturo to save the family. He leaves, and Raimondo, convinced no hope remains for Lucia's love, reminds her of her dead mother and urges her to do a sister's duty ("Ah! cedi, cedi"). She finally agrees, and he assures her that she will be rewarded in heaven.

The wedding guests arrive to witness the signing of the contract and welcome the bridegroom. Enrico explains to Arturo that Lucia is still in a state of melancholy because of her mother's death. The girl enters and reluctantly signs the marriage contract. Suddenly Edgardo bursts in, claiming his bride, and the entire company is overcome by shock (Sextet: "Chi mi frena in tal momento"). Arturo and Enrico order Edgardo to leave but he insists that he and Lucia are engaged. When Raimondo shows him the contract with Lucia's signature, Edgardo curses her and tears his ring from her finger before finally leaving in despair and rage.

Act III

Edgardo returns through a violent storm to his dilapidated home, the tower at Wolf's Crag. Enrico arrives and taunts Edgardo with the news that Lucia and Arturo have now wed and are headed to the bridal chamber. Enrico and Edgardo agree to meet at dawn by the tombs of the Ravenswoods for a duel.

Back at Lammermoor, Raimondo interrupts the wedding festivities with the news that Lucia has gone mad and killed Arturo. Lucia enters, covered in blood. Moving between tenderness, joy, and terror, she recalls her meetings with Edgardo and imagines she is with him on their wedding night ("Ardon gl'incensi"). She vows she will never be happy in heaven without her lover and that she will see him there. When Enrico returns, he is enraged at Lucia's behavior, but soon realizes that she has lost her senses. After a confused and violent exchange with her brother, Lucia collapses.

At the graveyard, Edgardo laments that he has to live without Lucia and awaits his duel with Enrico, which he hopes will end his own life ("Fra poco a me ricovero"). Guests coming from Lammermoor Castle tell him that the dying Lucia has called his name. As he is about to rush to her, Raimondo announces that she has died. Determined to join Lucia in heaven, Edgardo stabs himself ("Tu che a Dio").



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Gaetano Donizetti

Lucia di Lammermoor

Premiere: Teatro San Carlo, Naples, 1835

The character of Lucia has become an icon in opera and beyond, an archetype of the constrained woman asserting herself in society. She reappears as a touchstone for such diverse later characters as Flaubert's adulterous Madame Bovary and the repressed Englishmen in the novels of E. M. Forster. The insanity that overtakes and destroys Lucia, depicted in opera's most celebrated mad scene, has especially captured the public imagination. Donizetti's handling of this fragile woman's state of mind remains seductively beautiful, thoroughly compelling, and deeply disturbing. Madness as explored in this opera is not merely something that happens as a plot function: it is at once a personal tragedy, a political statement, and a healing ritual.

The Creators

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) composed about 75 operas plus orchestral and chamber music in a career abbreviated by mental illness and premature death. Most of his works, with the exceptions of the ever-popular *Lucia* and the comic gems *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Don Pasquale*, disappeared from the public eye after his death, but critical and popular opinion of the rest of his huge opus has grown considerably over the past 50 years. The Neapolitan librettist Salvatore Cammarano (1801–1852) also provided libretti for Verdi (*Luisa Miller* and *Il Trovatore*). The source for this opera was *The Bride of Lammermoor*, a novel by Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832), which the author set in the years immediately preceding the union of Scotland and England in 1707. Scott's novels of adventure and intrigue in a largely mythical old Scotland were wildly popular with European audiences.

The Music

Donizetti's operas and those of his Italian contemporaries came to be classified under the heading of *bel canto* ("beautiful singing"), a genre that focused on vocal agility and lyrical beauty to express drama. Today, the great challenge in performing this music lies in finding the right balance between elegant but athletic vocalism and dramatic insight. Individual moments from the score that can be charming on their own (for example, Lucia's Act I aria "Regnava nel silenzio" and the celebrated sextet that ends Act II) take on increased dramatic force when heard within the context of the piece. This is perhaps most apparent in the soprano's extended mad scene in Act III. The beauty of the melodic line throughout this long scene, and the graceful agility needed simply to hit the notes, could fool someone who heard it in concert into believing that this is

just an exercise in vocal pyrotechnics. In its place in the opera, however, with its musical allusions to past events and with the dramatic interpretation of the soprano, the mad scene is transformed. Its place in the drama makes it a shattering depiction of desperation, while the beauty of the music becomes an ironic commentary on the ugliness of “real” life. The tomb scene, built around two tremendously difficult arias for the tenor, is another example of dramatic context augmenting great melody and provides a cathartic contrast to the disciplined tension of the preceding mad scene.

The Setting

The tale is set in Scotland, which, to artists of the Romantic era, signified a wild landscape on the fringe of Europe, with a culture burdened by a French-derived code of chivalry and an ancient tribal system. Civil war and tribal strife are recurring features of Scottish history, creating a background of fragmentation reflected in both Lucia’s family situation and her own fragile psyche. The design of the Met’s production by Mary Zimmerman suggests a 19th-century setting, and some of its visual elements are inspired by actual places in Scotland.

Lucia di Lammermoor at the Met

Lucia had its company premiere on October 24, 1883, two days after the first performance by the brand new Metropolitan Opera Company. The title role was taken by the versatile Marcella Sembrich, who would become a New York favorite during the Met’s first two and a half decades. For a long time, Lucia was the domain of lyric sopranos who dazzled audiences with their coloratura techniques: French soprano Lily Pons debuted in the role in 1931 and sang it 92 more times until 1958; the colorful Australian Nellie Melba sang it 31 times between 1893 and 1901 (often dispensing with the final tomb scene so the diva’s great mad scene would conclude the opera). In the second half of the century and into our own, many different kinds of sopranos have taken the role, including, notably, Maria Callas for seven performances in 1956 and 1958. Other sopranos of diverse styles who have made marks on the role include Roberta Peters (29 performances between 1956 and 1971), Joan Sutherland (37 performances from her impressive Met debut in 1961 until 1982), Renata Scottò (20 from 1965 to 1973), the late Beverly Sills (7 performances in the 1976–77 season), and Ruth Ann Swenson (20 from 1989 to 2002). The current production had its premiere when it opened the 2007–08 season, with James Levine conducting and Natalie Dessay as Lucia and Marcello Giordani as Edgardo.

A Note from the Director

The opera *Lucia di Lammermoor* is based on Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*, which in turn was inspired by a true story that haunted Scott in childhood. In 1669 Janet Dalrymple, a Scottish girl from a noble family, fell in love with a certain Lord Rutherford. Between them they broke a piece of gold and vowed on pain of eternal damnation to be true to each other. But Janet's family objected to the union and insisted that she marry David Dunbar, heir of the wealthy Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon. On their wedding night, with hundreds of guests assembled, the couple retired to the bridal chamber. What happened next has been in dispute ever since. Violent screaming was heard and when the door was broken down, David Dunbar lay bleeding on the floor and Janet, maddened, was found crouched in the fireplace, covered with soot and gore. The only words she spoke were "Take up your bonny bridegroom." Within two weeks, Janet was dead and the groom had left Scotland. For the remainder of his short life he refused to speak about what had happened in that room.

In the opera, Lucia's description of the ghost at the fountain is taken by many as pure delusion and as evidence of an already fragile psyche. But the ghosts of Sir Walter Scott's novel (a book that Donizetti was very familiar with) are quite real. They are seen not only by Lucia but also by other characters, including Edgar (Edgardo), and are even described to the reader independent of any character's eye. The two versions need not exclude each other. There is a way to interpret the ghost that does not establish it as either absolutely imagined or absolutely literal; she is the manifestation of madness itself, and this madness is comprised, in part, of the unreasonable, selfish, prideful spirit of revenge, a spirit that has very real and tragic consequences for the Ravenswoods and Ashtons. The ghost is the image of the Ravenswood curse: jealousy, fury, and the wild desire to have and to hold even into death. Killed by a jealous lover, the spirit of the lost girl haunts the grounds of Ravenswood and beckons Lucia, conquering her and passing through her to overcome Edgardo as well, dragging all with her to the grave.

The ghost of Janet Dalrymple is persistent. She moved through Scott to Donizetti, who began to experience the first symptoms of his own madness during his engagement with the text. She then passed on to Flaubert and to his *Madame Bovary*, who, after being taken to see *Lucia di Lammermoor* in the novel, is driven almost crazy with desire for a young lover and starts on a path similar to Lucia's that will lead her to her doom. She has continued to move on through dozens of manifestations in popular culture, haunting such films as *The Fifth Element*, wherein the mad scene is sung by a many-tentacled blue creature, and, most recently, Scorsese's *The Departed*, wherein one of the villains experiences a less elevated pleasure than *Madame Bovary* to the accompaniment of the famous sextet. Janet Dalrymple, crouched in the fireplace, clings to us still, an emblem of every thwarted love, and finds herself today in her maddened sorrow in the midst of a glittering modern metropolis, still longing and burning with love. —*Mary Zimmerman*

Program Note

Operatically speaking, the year 1835 got off to a good start. On January 14, at the Théâtre-Italien in Paris, Vincenzo Bellini's opera *I Puritani* received its first performance. The all-star cast included the soprano Giulia Grisi, the tenor Giovanni Battista Rubini, the baritone Antonio Tamburini, and the bass Luigi Lablache. The success was immediate and wholehearted. Bellini's fellow composer, Gaetano Donizetti, who was in the audience, shared the enthusiasm of the public. In Paris to present a new opera of his own with the same cast, he wrote generously to a friend in Milan of Bellini's good fortune, adding modestly: "I don't at all deserve the success of *I Puritani*, but still I have no wish not to please." His opera *Marino Faliero* did not enjoy the overwhelming success of the Bellini work, but nevertheless did please the fastidious Parisian public, and the composer was received by the royal family and named a chevalier of the Legion of Honor.

For some years, Donizetti (born in 1797) and Bellini (four years his junior) had been pursuing parallel careers, first in Italy, then in the French capital, where success was crucial to an international career. And they were, by almost unanimous consensus, at the top of the profession. Rossini, the older contemporary, was quietly preparing to retire; in Milan, the young student Giuseppe Verdi was some years away from his debut. In 1835, as a result, it seemed that Bellini and Donizetti were leading the race.

Bellini felt the competition keenly. A somewhat rancorous young man, he was always ready to take a shot at his slightly older rival, but within a few months Bellini died of a mysterious illness, in Paris on September 23, 1835. Donizetti would, for a few years, virtually stand alone.

Soon after his Paris premiere, Donizetti was in Naples, hard at work on his next opera. Such was the arduous life of the early 19th-century Italian composer, always on the move from one theater to another as the opera houses kept up the demand for fresh music (revivals were rare, and audiences quickly became jaded). Though Donizetti came from Bergamo in the north, he was at home in Naples, then an important European capital. He had enjoyed success at the city's Teatro San Carlo and was an admired teacher there, surrounded by warm friendships.

In Naples, too, there was the librettist Salvatore Cammarano, commissioned to provide the text for Donizetti's new work. Scion of a large and much-admired theatrical family, this amiable, absent-minded writer-dramaturg was something of a local character, always ready to supply works for whatever composer was in town. He had begun his operatic career in 1832. It ended, almost two decades later, with *Il Trovatore*, which he began at the request of Verdi, although he died before he could quite complete it. Like all librettists of the time, Cammarano kept abreast of dramatic and literary fashions. He even had an eye for the classics and knew his Shakespeare—still something of an oddity in the Italian theater.

In 1835 perhaps the most popular writer in Europe was Sir Walter Scott, whose *Lady of the Lake* had been turned into a successful opera by Rossini in 1819. Though Bellini's *I Puritani* had no real connection to Sir Walter, the title

was sometimes altered to *I Puritani di Scozia*, simply to capitalize on continental audiences' fascination for Scotland. So it's not surprising that, for Donizetti's 47th opera, Cammarano turned to Scott, specifically to *The Bride of Lammermoor*, one of the author's shorter novels and, in Britain, far from the most popular. As was the custom of operatic poets, Cammarano—appropriating characters and situations without hesitation—also had no scruples about altering the plot, suppressing some characters and reconstructing others to suit his (and Donizetti's) needs. A list of a serious opera's required ingredients in the mid-1830s would almost certainly have included a pair of star-crossed lovers, a duel (or the threat of one), a grand ensemble—in this case, the betrothal house party—and, if possible, a long, lingering, and lyric death for the tenor. A mad scene, though not essential, was surely a welcome element. And Cammarano provided one, along with most of the other desiderata.

Unusually, Donizetti's opera was not rushed onto the stage. The chronic mismanagement of the Teatro San Carlo had become so outrageous that the opera-loving King Ferdinand II had to interfere, shuffling the directorship. Though Donizetti had finished the score in early July, rehearsals did not begin until the middle of August. They continued for over a month, until *Lucia di Lammermoor* was finally presented at the San Carlo on September 26.

There seems to be no doubt about the opera's success. Contemporary accounts of Italian performances are not always reliable (and 19th-century music critics were often incompetent or corrupt, or both). But Donizetti—who seldom deceived himself—wrote, on September 29, to his publisher Ricordi: "It pleased, and it pleased very much, if I am to believe the applause and the compliments I received." Audiences in those days tended to be talkative, and in Naples, even today, there is no rule of strict silence during the performance. So when Donizetti writes, in the same letter, "Every piece was listened to in religious silence," he is giving us another important measure of his triumph.

Many opera historians have referred to *Lucia* as the most famous of all Italian romantic operas. It's certainly a perfect blend of elements that we consider essential to the Romantic era: exotic scenery, intense emotions leading to physical and psychological violence, and—above all—the intervention of fate in a decisive and destructive fashion.

The opera's success in Naples was, in the space of a few years, echoed in other Italian theaters and then in Paris (1837), in London the following year, and in New York in 1843. Characteristically, when the anything-but-romantic novelist Gustave Flaubert decided to send his heroine Emma Bovary to the opera in his 1857 novel, he chose *Lucia* for her. And in *Anna Karenina*, 20 years later, the tone-deaf Tolstoy described a performance of the same work. It is likely that the two great novelists selected Donizetti's masterpiece not so much for its musical worth but because of the opposition of the story of ill-fated love to the disastrous, illicit love stories of the two doomed heroines.

In writing *Lucia* for the Teatro San Carlo, Donizetti knew that his music would be sung by the artists engaged for that season; therefore he knew his

protagonist would be the soprano Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani, daughter of a tenor and wife of a composer. Despite her youth (she was born in 1812), Fanny was already a recognized star by the time she came to sing Lucia, and Donizetti had written several previous operas for her. She was slight of frame, and her small but pure and impeccably tuned voice enhanced the impression of her vulnerability and innocence.

Since then, Lucia has remained a favored vehicle for a certain kind of vocally agile soprano; and if Tacchinardi-Persiani, in a sense, “made” Lucia, it can be said that in later generations Lucia “made” a number of sopranos. Maria Callas was more noted for another Donizetti role, the regal and tragic Anna Bolena, but it was a superb interpretation of Lucia that turned Joan Sutherland from a valued mainstay of the Royal Opera in London into an acclaimed international star. Sutherland’s total identification with Donizetti’s ethereal music conveyed even the physical impression of fragile innocence.

But while Lucia is inevitably associated with great sopranos—and one could name many others, including Giuseppina Strepponi (the future Signora Verdi, who sang the role at La Scala in 1839, three years before she participated in the premiere of Verdi’s *Nabucco* there)—many great tenors have sung the part of Edgardo, among them Gigli, Schipa, Di Stefano, and, more recently, Pavarotti. Similarly, illustrious baritones have interpreted Enrico, and though the bass role of Raimondo is not particularly rich, an artist as important as Ezio Pinza sang it willingly. The fact is that *Lucia* is a totally gratifying piece: a pleasure to sing, a pleasure to hear.

For Donizetti himself, the opera was a turning point. In the course of its composition, he suffered various physical ailments, including headaches, which some biographers have interpreted as the first signs of the syphilitic insanity that was to curtail his career less than a decade later and darken the final years before his death in 1848. Only a few months before the composer’s death, the tenor Rubini, who had sung Edgardo at the first French performance at the *Italien*, made the journey to Bergamo to see Donizetti, who by then seemed sunk in blank, mute dementia. With the composer’s hostess, the accomplished amateur musician Giovannina Basoni, Rubini performed the duet from *Lucia*. Donizetti showed no sign of recognition or appreciation. Six months later, in his 51st year, he died.

In the century and a half since that death, Donizetti’s reputation has suffered the alternate highs and lows common to most artists’ posthumous fame. In recent decades, many of his long-forgotten works have been happily revived (*Maria Stuarda* and *Roberto Devereux* among them), and at present his reputation seems stable. Through all of these vicissitudes, *Lucia* has remained firmly in place, ready to delight all lovers of singing. —*William Weaver*

The Glass Harmonica

When Donizetti wrote *Lucia di Lammermoor* in 1835, he had a brilliant idea for how to set the title heroine's state of mind to music. For the mad scene in the third act he chose a glass harmonica, invented by Benjamin Franklin in 1761. This rarely seen instrument produces an eerie sound that perfectly captures the essence of Lucia's unhinged psyche. The "armonica" (as Franklin called it) consists of a series of glass bowls of increasing size, arranged on a metal spindle, similar to the way the keys on a piano are set. The sound is produced by delicately touching the bowls, which are kept wet and turn on the revolving spindle, with the fingers of both hands.

The sound the armonica produces is basically the same you get when you rub a finger around the rim of a wine glass. Cecilia Brauer, a member of the Met Orchestra since 1972, plays



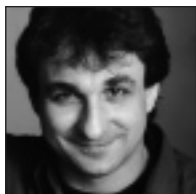
Met Orchestra member Cecilia Brauer at Franklin's "armonica"

the instrument in the Met performances, and says that's exactly how Franklin first got the idea: "While he was in England in 1757 Franklin went to a wine glass concert in Cambridge and was enchanted with the sound. He wanted an easier way to play it, and also he wanted to play more harmonies with his melody." Since the bowls on the armonica are arranged in the manner of keys, it is possible to play chords.

Almost 80 years later, Franklin's invention helped create one of the legendary scenes in the history of opera. For most modern performances of *Lucia*, the armonica is replaced by a flute, an option that Donizetti himself authorized when an armonica player could not be found for one of the performances during his lifetime. But at the Met his masterwork can be heard the way it was originally written. —*Philipp Brieler*

For more information about the armonica visit gigmasters.com/armonica.

The Cast



Marco Armiliato
CONDUCTOR (GENOA, ITALY)

THIS SEASON The Opening Night Gala, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Rondine*, and *Adriana Lecouvreur* at the Met; *La Traviata* in Berlin; *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Toulouse; *Tosca* in San Francisco; and *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* with the Vienna State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Nearly 200 performances, including *La Bohème* (debut, 1998), *La Traviata*, *La Fille du Régiment*, *Il Trovatore*, *Rigoletto*, *Aida*, *Turandot*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Andrea Chénier*, *Sly*, and *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS In recent seasons has led *Un Ballo in Maschera* with the San Francisco Opera; *Turandot* at Covent Garden; *La Rondine* at the Paris Opera; *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *La Bohème*, and *Il Trovatore* at the Bavarian State Opera; *Don Giovanni* in Hamburg; *Aida* in Berlin; and *Manon Lescaut*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Carmen*, and *La Traviata* at the Vienna State Opera.

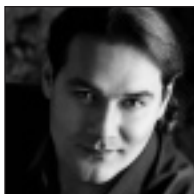


Anna Netrebko
SOPRANO (KRASNODAR, RUSSIA)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Met, St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre, and the Vienna State Opera, Giulietta in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* at Covent Garden, Mimì in *La Bohème* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, the title role of Tchaikovsky's *Iolantha* in Baden-Baden, and *Violetta* in *La Traviata* in Vienna, San Francisco, and for her debut in Zurich.

MET APPEARANCES Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette*, Natasha in *War and Peace* (debut, 2002), Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Norina in *Don Pasquale*, Mimì, and Elvira in *I Puritani*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS *Violetta* at the Salzburg Festival, Vienna State Opera, and Bavarian State Opera; Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Salzburg Festival; Ilia in *Idomeneo*, Susanna, and Gilda with Washington National Opera; Lucia and Juliette with Los Angeles Opera; and many leading roles with St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre since her debut with that company in 1994. She stars with Rolando Villazón in the recently released movie version of *La Bohème*.



Ildar Abdrazakov

BASS (UFA, RUSSIA)

THIS SEASON The Verdi Requiem, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and Leporello in *Don Giovanni* at the Met; the Verdi Requiem at Covent Garden and in Chicago; Méphistophélès in *La Damnation de Faust* in Vienna; and Moïse in Rossini's *Moïse et Pharaon* for his debut at the Salzburg Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Méphistophélès in *Faust*, Masetto in *Don Giovanni* (debut, 2004), Alidoro in *La Cenerentola*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, and Mustafà in *L'Italiana in Algeri*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Banquo in *Macbeth* at La Scala, Walter in *Luisa Miller* with the Paris Opera, and both Leporello and Don Giovanni with Washington National Opera. He has also sung Mustafà with the San Francisco Opera, Rome Opera, and Washington National Opera; Escamillo at the Vienna State Opera; Assur in *Semiramide* in Madrid and Barcelona; Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Los Angeles Opera; Leporello at St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre; and Raimondo, Calchas in *Iphigénie en Aulide*, Maometto in Rossini's *L'Assedio di Corinto*, and Selim in *Il Turco in Italia* at La Scala.



Mariusz Kwiecien

BARITONE (KRAKÓW, POLAND)

THIS SEASON The 125th Anniversary Gala, Marcello in *La Bohème*, and Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Met, Eugene Onegin with the Bolshoi Opera and for his debut with Munich's Bavarian State Opera, Don Giovanni at Covent Garden and with Opera Kraków, Enrico with the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Seattle Opera and in Madrid, the title role of *King Roger* with the Paris Opera, and Britten's *War Requiem* at Japan's Saito Kinen Festival.

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

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Paris Opera, Count Almaviva at the Glyndebourne Festival, Marcello at Covent Garden, and Don Giovanni at the Vienna State Opera, Seattle Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and San Francisco Opera. He is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Rolando Villazón

TENOR (MEXICO CITY, MEXICO)

THIS SEASON Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Met, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin* in Berlin, Hoffmann in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at Covent Garden, and Rodolfo in *La Bohème* and Werther in Baden-Baden.

MET APPEARANCES Alfredo in *La Traviata* (debut, 2003), the Duke in *Rigoletto*, and Rodolfo.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* and Alfredo at the Salzburg Festival; Lenski at Covent Garden; Roméo and Nemorino at the Vienna State Opera; Rodolfo, Faust, and Alfredo in Munich; Rodolfo in Rome; Nemorino in Barcelona; the title role of *Don Carlo* in Amsterdam; and Don José in *Carmen*, Nemorino, and Alfredo in Berlin. He has also been heard with Los Angeles Opera as Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, Des Grieux in *Manon*, and Roméo. He stars, with Anna Netrebko, in the recently released movie version of *La Bohème*.