

DANIEL CATÁN / LIBRETTO BY MARCELA FUENTES-BERAIN

FLORENCIA EN EL AMAZONAS

CONDUCTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

PRODUCTION
Mary Zimmerman

SET DESIGNER
Riccardo Hernández

COSTUME DESIGNER
Ana Kuzmanić

LIGHTING DESIGNER
T.J. Gerckens

PROJECTION DESIGNER
S. Katy Tucker

CHOREOGRAPHER
Alex Sanchez

Opera in two acts by Daniel Catán
Libretto by Marcela Fuentes-Berain

Monday, November 27, 2023
8:00–10:15PM

New Production

The production of *Florenxia en el Amazonas* was
made possible by a generous gift from
The Sybil B. Harrington Endowment Fund

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DANIEL CATÁN / LIBRETTO BY MARCELA FUENTES-BERAIN

FLORENCIA EN EL AMAZONAS

CONDUCTOR

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

SAILOR

Tyler Simpson

HUMMINGBIRD

Dandara Veiga

RIOLOBO

Mattia Olivieri

HERON

Griffin Massey

ROSALBA

Gabriella Reyes*

PUPPETEERS

Chris Ignacio

Leah Ogawa

Tom Lee

PAULA

Nancy Fabiola Herrera

ALVARO

Michael Chioldi

CAPTAIN

Greer Grimsley

FLORENCIA GRIMALDI

Ailyn Pérez

ARCADIO

Mario Chang*

This performance is
being broadcast live
on the SiriusXM app.

Monday, November 27, 2023, 8:00-10:15PM

Chorus Master **David Moody**
Musical Preparation **Howard Watkins,* Bradley Moore,*
Patrick Furrer, Adam Nielsen, and Israel Gursky**
Assistant Stage Directors **Sara Erde, Gina Lapinski, and
Daniel Rigazzi**
Assistant Set Designer **Maruti Evans**
Assistant Costume Designers **Lauren Gaston and
Chris Rumery**
Assistant Projection Designers **Kylee Loera and
Brad Peterson**
Spanish Diction Coach **Juan José Lázaro****
Prompter **Israel Gursky**
Met Titles **Christopher Bergen**
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Düsseldorf, Germany; Hochi Asiatico Studio, New York;
Marian Jean Hose, New York; Jeff Fender Studios, New
York; Jimmy McBride, New York; Seams Unlimited,
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Met Titles

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usher at intermission.

Synopsis

Act I

The Amazon rainforest, the early 1900s. Passengers aboard the steamboat *El Dorado* are traveling to hear the legendary opera singer Florencia Grimaldi sing at the reopening of the theater in Manaus. Riolobo, a mystical character who can assume many forms, introduces the embarking passengers: Paula and Alvaro, a middle-aged couple attempting to rekindle their marriage; Rosalba, a journalist researching a biography on Grimaldi; and Florencia herself, traveling alone and incognito, harboring a burning desire to find her long-lost lover Cristóbal, a butterfly hunter, whose love unlocked her staggering powers of musical expression.

Once en route, Rosalba accidentally drops her research notes overboard. The captain's nephew, Arcadio, rescues them, and the pair become aware of a strong mutual attraction. The evening concludes as Paula and Alvaro's attempt at a romantic dinner dissolves into a bitter quarrel. The captain, who initially appears unaware of Florencia's identity, tells her of the fate of Cristóbal, who disappeared in the jungle, thus throwing her dearest ambition into question. A heated card game brings out the contrasting sexual and hostile tensions between Rosalba and Arcadio and Paula and Alvaro, until the afternoon dissolves into a violent storm. Trying to save the ship, Alvaro is swept overboard. The captain is knocked unconscious, and despite Arcadio's efforts at the helm, the ship runs aground.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:00PM)

Act II

In the aftermath of the accident, Florencia questions if she is alive or dead, Rosalba and Arcadio renounce the love developing between them, and Paula mourns the loss of Alvaro, realizing that it was pride—not lack of love—that stood between them. Riolobo appears again mysteriously to return Alvaro to the ship, claiming that Paula's laments saved him from death. Rosalba, distraught that her notebook has been ruined in the storm, talks to the incognito Florencia about her research. During the ensuing discussion, Florencia declares passionately that Grimaldi's gift was a result of her love for Cristóbal. Rosalba realizes that she is talking to her heroine and, hearing her story, decides that her own love for Arcadio shouldn't be suppressed. To Rosalba's joy and relief, Arcadio reciprocates her feelings. Paula and Alvaro have also rediscovered their joy and love for each other.

El Dorado reaches Manaus at last; however, the passengers learn that cholera has struck the town. Florencia laments her loss of Cristóbal, and as she dreams of finding him, her spirit drifts towards his in a mystical transformation.

Daniel Catán / Libretto by Marcela Fuentes-Berain

Florencia en el Amazonas

Premiere: Houston Grand Opera, 1996

Fluidity—of time, place, emotion, and even of identity—is at the core of *Florencia en el Amazonas*. It is ostensibly the tale of passengers traveling down the Amazon River aboard the steamship *El Dorado*, connected by the enigmatic Riolobo, an intermediary between people and dimensions whom Catán perceived as his own stand-in among the cast. The real drama, though lies in the psychological journeys that each character undertakes. The libretto, by Marcela Fuentes-Berain, is an original story rich in allusion to other tales that skirt the border between drama and fantasy. Fuentes-Berain was a student of Gabriel García Márquez, whose style of magical realism (particularly in the great novel *Love in the Time of Cholera*) informs this story. The overall effect is much like the world it depicts, geographically (the Amazon) and emotionally (the search for love and fulfillment), utterly seductive yet with a danger lying just beneath its beautiful surface.

The Creators

Hailing from Mexico City, Daniel Catán (1949–2011) was a celebrated composer of orchestral, instrumental, vocal, and film music. Among his other operas are *La Hija de Rappaccini* (1991) and *Il Postino* (2010). The libretto is by Marcela Fuentes-Berain (b. 1955), a noted Mexican screenwriter and educator.

The Setting

The opera is set in the first years of the 20th century aboard a riverboat sailing through the Amazon River Basin. The name “el Amazonas” refers to the southernmost department, or state, in Colombia, as well as to the neighboring state across the border in Brazil (“o Amazonas” in Portuguese), of which Manaus is the capital.

The Music

Catán’s score is clearly and unabashedly romantic, reveling in luxuriant beauty and lush evocations of the natural world. The orchestra provides the basis for the flexibility between stylistic boundaries: sharp-edged conversation morphs seamlessly into expansive dream-like music that paints a portrait of the river; the turbulent storm in Act I emerges from casual chatter and subsides back into it. Riolobo, a baritone, is the character primarily responsible for negotiating the changes between reality and fantasy throughout the opera, especially in the finale of Act I, when he “calms the storm” by addressing the river gods

directly. His mythic identity “rises up” within his everyday character and bursts boundaries, an effect clearly discernible in the music depicting him and his world’s mutability. While the title character is undoubtedly the “prima donna” role, the second soprano in the cast, Rosalba, also has moving vocal solos reminiscent of Puccini, none more powerful than when she finally gives in to her feelings for Arcadio toward the end of Act II. The opera’s climax belongs to Florencia, who is transformed into a butterfly as her spirit transcends the human realm—recalling Wagner’s Isolde and her soaring Liebestod (“love-death”).

Met History

Only the third Spanish-language opera ever presented on the Met stage—following Granados’s *Goyescas* in 1916 and de Falla’s *La Vida Breve* in 1926—*Florencia en el Amazonas* has its company premiere this season. Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducts a new production by Mary Zimmerman that stars Ailyn Pérez in the title role, alongside Gabriella Reyes, Nancy Fabiola Herrera, Mario Chang, Michael Chioldi, Mattia Olivieri, and Greer Grimsley.



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

Program Note

Critical responses to Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas* often compare the opera to the music of another composer. At the top of the list for frequency of reference are Puccini, Debussy, Stravinsky, and Strauss. But there are also outliers: Satie, Britten, Verdi, Michael Nyman, Copland, and any type of "Hollywood Voyager Music." Catán himself did not downplay the influence that all kinds of music had on his work, especially during his travels and the 14 years he lived abroad:

It opened my eyes to the infinitely varied world of music, well beyond the confines of the piano. London seemed to me like the center of the music world. I heard *Petroushka* and the *St. Matthew Passion*, *The Rite of Spring* and Beethoven's string quartets; I saw operas by Mozart, Wagner, Strauss, and a memorable *Oedipus Rex* by Stravinsky at the old Sadler's Wells Theatre that haunts me to this day.

The critics are not necessarily wrong; a lifetime of accrued musical memories always lurks in the shadows of the listening experience, no less so than in the ear of the composer. *Florencia en el Amazonas* operates on two intertwining musical planes. The first is traditional: the soundscape of Florencia Grimaldi, an opera singer, whose soaring vocal lines and rich Puccini-esque harmonies unfold in distinct arias, duets, ensembles, and choruses. She is on a mission to revisit her musical roots in Manaus, a large city deep in the Amazon rainforest that does, indeed, have an elegant, European-style opera house. The beautiful Teatro Amazonas took more than 15 years to build and opened with a performance of Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*. In his fascinating account of an Amazonian adventure, *The Lost City of Z*, David Grann describes the edifice as an "[extravagance], with its Italian marble, Bohemian glass, gilded balconies, [and] chandeliers."

Catán's second musical track is atmospheric and descriptive: haunting orchestral interludes and modernistic lines immerse listeners in sounds of the jungle. Nature reveals itself in unprepared dissonances, swooping harp glissandi, quivering strings, and edgy winds and brass, as the occasional dance rhythms of the marimba and the West African djembe mimic creatures of the night "singing" to their mates. In his essay "On How I Found Florencia and Got to the Amazon," Catán described his musical goals: "Every thought, every image of the Amazon, suggested timbres, rhythms, melodies." An instrumental meditation on nature in all of its beauty, mystery, and terror thus intersects with the "facts" of conventional opera. If Catán alludes to another composer in this context, it is surely Bartók, whose "Night Music" style is evoked by the sounds of insects, animals, and undulating waters liberated by the darkness from human noise.

Florencia and her fellow travelers undertake their Amazonian journey from Leticia, Colombia, to Manaus, Brazil, at great risk. The Amazon River, at 3,977 miles, meanders through dense jungle inhabited by snakes, piranhas, electric

eels, giant centipedes, tarantulas, poison dart frogs, pit vipers, spiders, and, of course, mosquitoes. There are numerous poisonous plants, including the strychnos and a cannonball tree that can drop its exploding fruit on unaware passersby. But danger has always seduced the explorers, opportunists, seekers, and dreamers of fiction and nonfiction: Fitzcarraldo, film director Werner Herzog's early-20th-century would-be rubber baron and obsessive opera lover who insisted that a steamship be hoisted over a mountain to facilitate the construction of an opera house in the jungle; Percy Fawcett, a British explorer, whose quest for the ruins of an ancient but advanced civilization was recounted by Grann (Fawcett, like Florencia's lost love, Cristóbal, disappeared into the Brazilian jungle); and, finally, the iconic Indiana Jones, who searched for the crystal skull of Akator, a pseudonym for the lost city of gold, El Dorado, not coincidentally the name of the ship that takes Florencia to Manaus.

Catán and his librettist, Marcela Fuentes-Berain, dedicated their work "In Homage to Gabriel García Márquez," the Nobel Prize-winning author of *Love in the Time of Cholera*, a loose inspiration for the opera's story. Márquez was known for the magical realism of his novels, which Catán's widow, Andrea Puente-Catán, described as

when fantastical things happen in people's lives. For Latin Americans, it's like those magical moments are integrated into the way we live. [For example], my aunt died, and three days after, I suddenly found her little box with threads and needles and pins on the stairs of my house—yes, this actually happened! Instead of me saying, "Maybe this dropped from a bag," I said, "Oh, my Niña came to visit and left me this box just to remind me that she's still around."

Florencia en el Amazonas embodies "magical realism" at its core. While Fuentes-Berain's libretto is steeped in Amazonian mythos, it is, at the same time, securely bound to material existence. At the most fundamental level is the journey itself: To those living in the early 1900s, a riverboat would be a common means of transportation. In the 21st century, with our extensive network of personal and public transportation, such an excursion would seem like a novelty. In actuality, while a native or experienced guide could surely travel the backroads on foot or in an all-terrain vehicle, for the average person, the only direct way remains by boat—a journey of about three and a half days. The libretto lays out Florencia's journey in a precise timeline: The first five scenes take place in the morning, afternoon, and evening of the first day. Scene 6 begins on the second day, which continues across the intermission into Scene 11. Scene 12 takes place at dawn on the third day and continues into the afternoon, when the opera ends.

References to real places and things abound: the "grains, fruits, vegetables; powders and oils; opals, emeralds, and silver" hawked by vendors on the dock in Leticia; Florencia has canceled performances at La Scala in order to undertake this voyage; engine pressure reads "102," and the ship moves at a speed of

"one or two knots"; a card game features an ace of hearts, three of spades, queen of diamonds, and six of clubs; Arcadio longs to see "London, Tahiti, Sierra Nevada ... the snows of Everest, the plains of Argentina, [and] the African sun;" Paula and Alvaro dine on iguana and sip rosé, but they fight and throw their wedding rings into the bottom of a Champagne bottle; the Captain recalls the specificity of Cristóbal's mission to find the "rarest butterfly in the world, the Emerald Muse"; several characters are even named for natural phenomena—Rosalba ("the rosy dawn"), Arcadio ("the pristine forest"), Riolobo ("river wolf"), and finally, Florencia ("flowering" or "blooming").

But the comfortably mundane and the pastoral are breached by an apocalyptic conclusion to Act I: In a surreal and violent storm, lightning bolts strike the ship as "cherry-colored droplets of rain fall on the Captain's white uniform." The Captain does not so much as blink at the stains on his clothing; he is only surprised that there is lightning "in a dry month." He pleads with the "Amazons of the river" to "guide his hand" as the enigmatic Riolobo beseeches the Amazons not to "destroy the world." An offstage chorus echoes his entreaty. The "magical realism" of the libretto is reflected in Catán's bifurcated musical choices: The conventional melodies and structures of opera live beside and within the sonorities of the wild.

This primal space opens the mind and heart to rebirth and acceptance. Alvaro performs a heroic deed and recaptures Paula's affection; Rosalba, the single-minded careerist, is transformed by the ravages of the storm and accepts Arcadio's love. But it is Florencia who best understands the magic of reality: "Hear me, Cristóbal. My voice soars toward you and spreads its wings, sheltering the world's love. My voice was born in you, from your hands, which asleep or awake, dream of wondrous butterflies."

—Helen M. Greenwald

Helen M. Greenwald is chair of the department of music history at New England Conservatory and editor of The Oxford Handbook of Opera.

The Cast and Creative Team



Daniel Catán

COMPOSER (MEXICO CITY, MEXICO)

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS The music of Daniel Catán is among the most significant and best loved of any composers in the 21st century. Known principally as a composer of operas, his oeuvre also spans works for orchestra, chamber music, and art song, as well as music for film and television, music theater, and even traditional Latin pop. He studied philosophy at the University of Sussex in England before enrolling in Princeton University as a PhD student in composition under Milton Babbitt, James Randall, and Benjamin Boretz. His opera *La Hija de Rappaccini*, which appeared at San Diego Opera in 1994, was the first opera by a Mexican composer ever produced by a professional opera company in the United States, while *Florencia en el Amazonas* was the first opera in Spanish commissioned by a major American company and premiered at Houston Grand Opera in 1996. The success of this opera led to the commission of *Salsipuedes* for Houston Grand Opera, and his fourth opera, *Il Postino*, was commissioned by LA Opera and also appeared in Vienna and Paris. At the time of his death in 2011, he was at work on his next opera, *Meet John Doe*.



Marcela Fuentes-Berain

LIBRETTIST (MEXICO CITY, MEXICO)

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Having studied with celebrated novelist Gabriel García Márquez, she provided the libretto for the world premiere of *Florencia en el Amazonas* at Houston Grand Opera in 1996. Her work has also appeared extensively across film, television, radio, and theater. Her screenplays include Mexican Spanish productions *La Hija del Caníbal*, starring Cecilia Roth, *Hasta Morir*, and *Ciudad de Ciegos* and Colombian director Víctor Gaviria's *Sumas y Restas*, winner of Best Movie at the Cartagena Film Festival and Best Foreign Film by the Mexican Academy of Film Arts and Sciences. She also collaborated with director Tony Scott on *Man on Fire*, starring Denzel Washington. She has served as a script consultant for the Sundance Institute for more than 20 years, a member of the selection committee of Spain's Huelva Ibero-American Film Festival since 2001, and as part of Mexico's Bicentennial Film Committee in 2010. She is a member of Mexican Academy of Cinematographic Arts and was part of Proimágenes Colombia evaluating movie projects. A pioneer and founder of the prestigious Bolivia Lab and an esteemed educator, she has been a teacher and advisor in many important Latin American films and books.



Yannick Nézet-Séguin

CONDUCTOR (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON *Florencia en el Amazonas*, Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, Verdi's *Requiem*, *La Forza del Destino*, and *Roméo et Juliette* at the Met; *Die Walküre* in concert with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra; and concerts with the Met Orchestra, Met Orchestra Chamber Ensemble, Orchestre Métropolitain, Philadelphia Orchestra, National

Youth Orchestra of the United States of America, and Berlin Philharmonic.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 2009 debut leading *Carmen*, he has conducted 20 operas, including *La Bohème*, Terence Blanchard's *Champion* and *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, *Lohengrin*, Kevin Puts's *The Hours*, *Don Carlos*, and Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is in his fifth season as the Met's Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer Music Director. He has served as music director of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 2012 and artistic director and principal conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. In 2018, he became honorary conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, where he was music director for ten seasons, and in 2016, he was named an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. Between 2008 and 2014, he was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He has won three Grammy Awards.



Mary Zimmerman

DIRECTOR (CHICAGO, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON *Florencia en el Amazonas* at the Met and *The Matchbox Magic Flute* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre and Washington, D.C.'s Shakespeare Theatre Company.

MET PRODUCTIONS Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice*, *Rusalka*, *Armida*, *La Sonnambula*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She is the 1998 recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship, the 2002 Tony Award for Best Director of a Play (for *Metamorphoses*, which she also wrote), and numerous Joseph Jefferson Awards. She is an artistic associate of Goodman Theatre, a professor of performance studies at Northwestern University, and an ensemble member at Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company. She directed and co-wrote the libretto for Philip Glass's *Galileo Galilei* and has received acclaim for her theatrical adaptations of *Candide*, *The Jungle Book*, *White Snake*, *Mirror of the Invisible World*, *The Notebooks of Leonardo Da Vinci*, *Journey to the West*, and *The Odyssey*, as well as her productions of *The Music Man*, *Wonderful Town*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *The Trojan Women*, and *Pericles and Silk*. Her work has also appeared at La Scala, BAM, Second Stage Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Guthrie Theater, and the Mark Taper Forum, among others.



Riccardo Hernández

SET DESIGNER (HAVANA, CUBA)

THIS SEASON *Florencia en el Amazonas* for his debut at the Met, *Carmen* at the Glyndebourne Festival, and *Lempicka* and *Suffs* on Broadway.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He made his Broadway debut in 1995 with *The Tempest* and has since designed productions of *Bring in 'Da Noise*, *Bring in 'Da Funk*, *Parade* (Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations), *Bells Are Ringing*, *Elaine Stritch at Liberty*, *Topdog/Underdog*, *Caroline, or Change*, *The People in the Picture*, *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, *The Gin Game*, *Indecent*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *Jagged Little Pill* (Tony Award nomination), and *The Thanksgiving Play*. He has also received an OBIE Award, Henry Hewes Design Award, and Princess Grace Statue Award, and

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

his work has been featured Off Broadway, in the West End, and at leading theaters around the United States. His designs for opera includes productions at the Canadian Opera Company, English National Opera, Madrid's Teatro Real, National Opera of Chile, Mexico City's Ópera de Bellas Artes, Portland Opera, Houston Grand Opera, the Glimmerglass Festival, Seattle Opera, New York City Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, the Santa Fe Opera, and LA Opera, among others.



Ana Kuzmanić

COSTUME DESIGNER (SPLIT, CROATIA)

THIS SEASON *Florencia en el Amazonas* at the Met and *The Matchbox Magic Flute* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre and Washington, D.C.'s Shakespeare Theatre Company.

MET PRODUCTIONS Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice* (debut, 2021).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She made her Broadway debut in 2007 designing costumes for *August: Osage County* by Tracy Letts and has also contributed designs for Broadway productions of *The Minutes*, *Superior Donuts*, and *Desire Under the Elms*. Her work has appeared Off Broadway; in the U.K., Australia, Canada, and Serbia; and regionally at the Guthrie Theater, McCarter Theatre Center, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, Steppenwolf Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Geffen Playhouse, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, among many others. Her designs have been honored with Drama Desk, Helen Hayes, Henry Hewes, and Joseph Jefferson nominations and awards. Her work in opera has included *Don Giovanni* at Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Dallas Opera and *Eurydice* at the LA Opera. She has collaborated with Mary Zimmerman on projects including the world premieres of *Argonautika*, *The Steadfast Tin Soldier*, and *Treasure Island*. She designed for her fashion label from 1993 to 2001 and is currently a professor in the department of theatre at Northwestern University.



T.J. Gerckens

LIGHTING DESIGNER (COLUMBUS, OHIO)

THIS SEASON *Florencia en el Amazonas* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice*, *Rusalka*, *La Sonnambula*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has been part of Mary Zimmerman's design team for 30 years and has received numerous awards, including a Drama Desk Award and Lucille Lortel Awards for his lighting of *Metamorphoses* on and off Broadway, Joseph Jefferson Awards for *The Odyssey* and *Metamorphoses* in Chicago, and an Award for Exemplifying the Art of Collaboration given to the Zimmerman design team by *Entertainment Design* magazine. His work has also appeared at La Scala, LA Opera, the Australian Ballet (Melbourne, Sydney Opera House, Adelaide, and Brisbane), New York Shakespeare Festival, BAM, Lincoln Center's SeriousFun! Festival, Second Stage Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Mark Taper Forum, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Melbourne Theatre Company, Seattle Rep, the Guthrie Theater, Huntington Theatre Company, Lookingglass Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, and Arena Stage, among others. He is an associate professor of lighting design at Otterbein University, where he also serves as chair of the department of theatre and dance.



S. Katy Tucker

PROJECTION DESIGNER (BROOKLYN, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON *Florencia en el Amazonas* at the Met, *The Pianist* at George Street Playhouse, *Medea* at the Canadian Opera Company, *Turandot* at Washington National Opera, and *Das Rheingold* at La Scala.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Medea*, Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice*, *Verdi's Requiem: The Met Remembers 9/11*, *Mefistofele*, and *Prince Igor* (debut, 2014).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She designs video and projections for live performance internationally, working frequently in opera and collaborating with composers and musicians, including Paul McCartney, Helga Davis, Pamela Z, Paola Prestini, Amanda Gookin, and Jeffrey Ziegler. Her work has been seen on and off Broadway and at New York City Ballet, Carnegie Hall, Park Avenue Armory, BAM, San Francisco Opera, Utah Opera, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Greek National Opera, Dutch National Opera, Sydney Opera House, and Houston Grand Opera, among others. She began her career as a painter and installation artist, exhibiting her work at such galleries as the Corcoran Museum, Dupont Underground, Dillon Gallery, and Artist's Space in New York City.



Alex Sanchez

CHOREOGRAPHER (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

THIS SEASON *Florencia en el Amazonas* for his debut at the Met, *The Gardens of Anuncia* at Lincoln Center Theater, and *The Jerusalem Syndrome* at the York Theatre Company.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He began his career as a dancer with Ballet Chicago and made his debut on Broadway in 1993 in *The Red Shoes*. Additional Broadway performance credits include *Carousel*, *Love! Valour! Compassion!*, *Big*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Fosse*, *Follies*, *Wonderful Town*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, and *Chita Rivera: The Dancer's Life*. In 2021, he provided the musical staging for *Paradise Square*. He has choreographed for the Public Theater, Playwrights Horizon, New York City Center, and Amas Musical Theater and directed productions at Paper Mill Playhouse, Maine State Theater, and the Marriott Theatre. Additional regional credits include work at Goodman Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Dallas Theater Center, and the Goodspeed Opera House. As a choreographer, he has received a Jeff Award and Joe A. Callaway Award and was named one of *Dance Magazine's* 25 to Watch. He has been nominated for a Lucille Lortel Award, Outer Critics Circle Award, Connecticut Critics Circle Award, nine Jeff Awards, and was a SDC Breakout Award finalist.

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED



Nancy Fabiola Herrera

MEZZO-SOPRANO (CANARY ISLANDS, SPAIN)

THIS SEASON Paula in *Florencia en el Amazonas* at the Met and Neris in *Medea* at Madrid's Teatro Madrid.

MET APPEARANCES Maddalena in *Rigoletto*, Herodias in *Salome*, Fenena in *Nabucco*, the title role of *Carmen*, and Suzuki in *Madama*

Butterfly (debut, 2005).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Mayka in the world premiere of Lucas Vidal's *Trato de Favor*, María in Giménez's *La Tempranica*, Bernarda in Miguel Ortega's *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*, and Beatriz in Bretón's *Farinelli* at Madrid's Teatro de la Zarzuela; Sara in *Roberto Devereux* in Seville; the Princess of Bouillon in *Adriana Lecouvreur* in Oviedo; Bernarda in Santa Cruz de Tenerife and Málaga; Azucena in *Il Trovatore* in Las Palmas; and Léonor de Guzman in *La Favorite* in Málaga. She has also sung Dalila in *Samson et Dalila* in Seville; Giulietta in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Beijing; Paula at Houston Grand Opera, LA Opera, and Washington National Opera; Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri* in Buenos Aires; Fenena at LA Opera; Léonor de Guzman in Las Palmas; Cecilia in Usandizaga's *Las Golondrinas* at the Teatro de la Zarzuela; Carmen in Lima; and Eboli in *Don Carlo* at Madrid's Teatros del Canal.



Ailyn Pérez

SOPRANO (CHICAGO, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Florencia en el Amazonas* and Micaëla in *Carmen* at the Met, Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* at Houston Grand Opera and in Madrid and Naples, the title role of *Tosca* in Hamburg, and Magda in *La Rondine* with Washington Concert Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Alice Ford in *Falstaff*, Blanche de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Mimì and Musetta in *La Bohème*, Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette*, the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the title role of *Thaïs*, and Micaëla (debut, 2015).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the title role of *Rusalka* at the Santa Fe Opera; Mimì at the Paris Opera, Staatsoper Berlin, Covent Garden, and Bavarian State Opera; Elisabetta di Valois in *Don Carlo* in Naples; the Countess at the Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival and in Hamburg; the title role of *Manon* at the Paris Opera; and *Tosca* at San Francisco Opera. She has also appeared at the Vienna State Opera, La Scala, Dutch National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Dallas Opera, among others. She was the 2016 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman.



Gabriella Reyes

SOPRANO (MERIDEN, CONNECTICUT)

THIS SEASON Rosalba in *Florencia en el Amazonas* and Liù in *Turandot* at the Met, Nedda in *Pagliacci* at Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Mimì in *La Bohème* at the Atlanta Opera, and Marzelline in *Fidelio* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

MET APPEARANCES Musetta in *La Bohème*, Liù, the First Lady in *The Magic Flute*, Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*, and the Priestess in *Aida* (debut, 2018).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Mimi at Washington National Opera and with the Glyndebourne Festival, Margarita Xirgu in Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* at Detroit Opera, Musetta in Dresden, Rosalba at Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Cio-Cio-San in Marina Abramović's *7 Deaths of Maria Callas* and the Priestess at the Paris Opera. She has also sung Musetta at the Santa Fe Opera and with the Jacksonville Symphony; the soprano in Philip Glass's *Hydrogen Jukebox*, the title role of Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*, the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Minskwoman in Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, and a Greek Woman and a Priestess in *Iphigénie en Tauride* with Boston University's Opera Institute; and the Princess in Montsalvatge's *El Gato con Botas* with OperaHub. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Mario Chang

TENOR (GUATEMALA CITY, GUATEMALA)

THIS SEASON Arcadio in *Florencia en el Amazonas* at the Met, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* at Palm Beach Opera, Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* at Arizona Opera, Ruggiero in *La Rondine* with Washington Concert Opera, Alfredo in *La Traviata* at Irish National Opera, and Verdi's Requiem with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, the Italian Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and the Fourth Sentry in *Parsifal* (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Cavaradossi in Seville, the title role of *Ernani* in Oviedo, Alfredo in Hong Kong, Nemorino at Festival Napa Valley and Palm Beach Opera, the title role of *Werther* in Montpellier, and Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at Arizona Opera and the Santa Fe Opera. As a member of the ensemble at Oper Frankfurt, his roles included Lenski in *Eugene Onegin*, the Italian Singer in *Capriccio* and *Der Rosenkavalier*, Cassio in *Otello*, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, the title role of *Roberto Devereux*, and Rodolfo. He is the founder and director of Querido Arte Opera de Guatemala, the first opera company in Guatemala. He is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Michael Chioldi

BARITONE (LATROBE, PENNSYLVANIA)

THIS SEASON Alvaro in *Florencia en el Amazonas* at the Met and Germont in *La Traviata* at Pittsburgh Opera.

MET APPEARANCES The title role of *Rigoletto*, Moralès in *Carmen*, Prince Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly*, Wagner in *Faust*, Pâris in *Roméo et Juliette*, and Fléville in *Andrea Chénier* (debut, 1996).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Donner in *Das Rheingold* at Seattle Opera; Germont at Seattle Opera, the Phoenicia International Festival of the Voice, and with New York City Opera; the title role of *Falstaff* and Tonio in *Pagliacci* at Palm Beach Opera; the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer* at Utah Opera; Marcello in *La Bohème* and Scarpia in *Tosca* at Seattle Opera; and *Rigoletto* with New York City Opera. He has also sung Scarpia

The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

at Palm Beach Opera and in concert at Opera San Antonio; Dunois in Tchaikovsky's *The Maid of Orleans* at New Orleans Opera; Rigoletto, Scarpia, Iago in *Otello*, and Germont at Austin Opera; Germont at Utah Opera and Washington National Opera; the title role of Saint-Saëns's *Henry VIII* in concert with Boston's Odyssey Opera; and Miller in *Luisa Miller* and Carlo Gérard in *Andrea Chénier* in Barcelona.



Greer Grimsley

BASS-BARITONE (NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA)

THIS SEASON The Captain in *Florenzia en el Amazonas* at the Met, Shreveport Opera's *A Diamond Jubilee Concert*, Scarpia in *Tosca* at Palm Beach Opera, Gurnemanz in *Parsifal* at the Royal Swedish Opera, Wotan in *Die Walküre* at the Atlanta Opera, and Paul in the world premiere of Gregory Spears's *The Righteous* at the Santa Fe Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Orest in *Elektra*, Wotan in the *Ring* cycle, Don Pizarro in *Fidelio*, Jochanaan in *Salome*, Scarpia, Telramund in *Lohengrin*, Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, and Captain Balstrode in *Peter Grimes* (debut, 1994).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has sung Wotan at the Bayreuth Festival, Royal Swedish Opera, San Francisco Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Seattle Opera, Minnesota Opera, and in Madrid, Tokyo, Bologna, Venice, Barcelona, and Cologne. Recent performances also include Scarpia at San Diego Opera and Michigan Opera Theatre, the High Priest of Dagon in *Samson et Dalila* in concert at Seattle Opera, Don Pizarro at San Francisco Opera, the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Dallas Opera and in concert with the San Francisco Symphony, Iago in *Otello* in concert with the Pacific Symphony, and Kurwenal at the Bayreuth Festival.



Mattia Olivieri

BARITONE (SASSUOLO, ITALY)

THIS SEASON Riolobo in *Florenzia en el Amazonas* for his debut at the Met; Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin; Sévère in Donizetti's *Les Martyrs* in Vienna; Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Bavarian State Opera; Guido di Monforte in *I Vespri Siciliani*, Paolo Albiani in *Simon Boccanegra*, and Escamillo in *Carmen* in Naples; Filippo Maria Visconti in Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* in Genoa; and Silvio in *Pagliacci* and Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* at La Scala.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Silvio at Covent Garden; Prosdócimo in *Il Turco in Italia* in Madrid and at the Glyndebourne Festival; Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* and Escamillo in Florence; Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Ping in *Turandot* at the Paris Opera; Marcello in *La Bohème*, Silvio, and Ford in *Falstaff* in Valencia; Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore* in Venice; Pallante in *Agrippina* in Munich; Ping in concert with the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia; Guido di Monforte in Palermo; and Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at La Scala and the Vienna State Opera.