

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

# RUSALKA

CONDUCTOR  
Sir Mark Elder

PRODUCTION  
Mary Zimmerman

SET DESIGNER  
Daniel Ostling

COSTUME DESIGNER  
Mara Blumenfeld

LIGHTING DESIGNER  
T. J. Gerckens

CHOREOGRAPHER  
Austin McCormick

GENERAL MANAGER  
Peter Gelb

MUSIC DIRECTOR EMERITUS  
James Levine

PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR  
Fabio Luisi

Opera in three acts

Libretto by Jaroslav Kvapil,  
based on the fairy tale *Undine*  
by Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué

Saturday, February 25, 2017  
1:00–4:45PM

New Production

The production of *Rusalka* was made possible by a generous gift from the **Betsy and Ed Cohen / Areté Foundation**

Additional funding for this production was received from Mr. William R. Miller, in memory of Irene D. Miller; and the National Endowment for the Arts

# The Metropolitan Opera

2016-17 SEASON

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The 34th Metropolitan Opera performance of

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK’S

## RUSALKA

CONDUCTOR  
Sir Mark Elder

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

FIRST WOOD SPRITE  
Hyesang Park\*\*

PRINCE  
Brandon Jovanovich

SECOND WOOD SPRITE  
Megan Marino

GAMEKEEPER  
Alan Opie

THIRD WOOD SPRITE  
Cassandra Zoé Velasco

KITCHEN BOY  
Daniela Mack

VODNÍK, A WATER GNOME,  
RUSALKA’S FATHER  
Eric Owens

FOREIGN PRINCESS  
Katarina Dalayman

RUSALKA, A WATER NYMPH  
Kristine Opolais

JEŽIBABA, A WITCH  
Jamie Barton

HUNTER  
Anthony Clark Evans

Saturday, February 25, 2017, 1:00–4:45PM

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Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**  
Musical Preparation **Gareth Morrell, Carol Isaac,**  
**Miloš Repický, and Bryan Wagorn\***  
Assistant Stage Directors **Gregory Keller, Daniel Rigazzi,**  
**and Paula Suozzi**  
Prompter **Carol Isaac**  
Met Titles **Christopher Bergen**  
Assistant Costume Designer **Dana Burkart**  
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and  
painted in **Metropolitan Opera Shops**  
Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume**  
**Department; Suitable Costumes LTD, Toronto;**  
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**Wig and Makeup Department**

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# Synopsis

## Act I

A lake in the forest, in fairy-tale times. The water nymph Rusalka sits sadly by the water as wood sprites sing and dance. When the Water Gnome, her father, asks why she is unhappy, she replies that she fell in love with a human—the Prince—when he came to swim in the lake. Now she wants to become human herself and live on land to be with him. Horrified, the Water Gnome tells her that humans are evil and full of sin. When Rusalka insists, claiming humans are full of love, he says she will have to get help from the witch Ježibaba, then sinks back into the lake in despair. Rusalka calls on the moon to tell the Prince of her love. Ježibaba arrives and agrees to turn Rusalka into a human—but warns her that if she doesn't find love, she will be damned and the man she loves will die. Also, to become mortal, she will have to sacrifice her voice. Convinced that her feelings for the Prince can overcome all spells, Rusalka agrees, and Ježibaba gives her a potion to drink. As dawn breaks, the Prince appears with a hunting party and finds Rusalka. Even though she won't speak to him, he is captivated by her beauty and takes her away to his castle.

*Intermission* (AT APPROXIMATELY 2:00 PM)

## Act II

At the Prince's castle, the Gamekeeper and the Kitchen Boy gossip about the approaching wedding of the Prince and his strange new bride, whose name nobody knows. The Prince enters with Rusalka. He wonders why she is so cold toward him but remains determined to win her. A Foreign Princess, who has come for the wedding, mocks Rusalka's silence and reproaches the Prince for ignoring his guests. The Prince sends Rusalka away to dress for the ball and escorts the Princess away.

The Water Gnome appears, looking for Rusalka, who is becoming more and more intimidated by her surroundings. She begs him to help her, telling him that the Prince no longer loves her. The Prince enters with the Princess and confesses his love for her. When Rusalka intervenes, rushing into his arms, he rejects her. The Water Gnome warns the Prince of the fate that awaits him, then disappears with Rusalka. The Prince pleads with the Princess for help but she ridicules him and tells him to follow his bride into hell.

*Intermission* (AT APPROXIMATELY 3:20 PM)

## Act III

Rusalka has returned to the lake and laments her fate. Ježibaba mocks her, then hands her a knife and explains that there is a way to save herself: she must kill the Prince. Rusalka refuses, throwing the weapon into the water. Her sisters reject her as well when she sinks into the lake in despair. The Gamekeeper and the Kitchen Boy arrive to ask Ježibaba for help. The Prince, they say, has been bewitched by a strange forest girl he was going to marry. Enraged, the Water Gnome rises from the lake, saying that it was the Prince who deceived Rusalka. Terrified by the supernatural sight, the two run away. The wood sprites enter, singing and dancing, but when the Water Gnome explains to them what has happened to Rusalka, they fall silent and disappear.

The Prince, desperate and half crazy with remorse, emerges from the forest, looking for Rusalka and calling out for her to return to him. She appears and reproaches him for his infidelity, and explains that now a kiss from her would kill him. Accepting his destiny, he asks her to kiss him to give him peace. She does, and he dies in her arms. The Water Gnome sings that all has been in vain. Rusalka asks for mercy on the Prince's soul and disappears.

*Antonín Dvořák*

# Rusalka

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*Premiere: National Theater, Prague, 1901*

The only opera by the great Czech composer Antonín Dvořák that has (so far) gained an international following, *Rusalka* is in many ways a definitive example of late Romanticism. Folklore, evocations of the natural and the supernatural worlds, and even a poignant interpretation of the idea of a love-death are all contained in this very human fairy tale. The opera tells of a water nymph (the title character) who longs to become human so she can win the love of a prince. The story has a strong national flavor as well as universal appeal, infused by the Romantic supernaturalism of, principally, Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué's novella *Undine* (previously set as an opera by E.T.A. Hoffmann, Tchaikovsky, and others), but also Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* and other folktales. The opera was written for the National Theater in Prague, an institution with a mission to develop Czech consciousness and patriotism during a time when the country was under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The composer's national consciousness, the folkloric ambience of the piece, and the fact that it's written in Czech have all assured the opera's popularity with the Czech public, for whom it is considered a national treasure.

### *The Creators*

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904) was a Czech composer celebrated during his lifetime for his chamber, choral, and symphonic music. His many works to achieve international popularity include the String Quartet No. 12, "The American," the Piano Trio No. 4, "Dumky," the Requiem, the Slavonic Dances, the Cello Concerto, and nine published symphonies. Dvořák was especially popular in London and in New York, where he served for a while as director of the short-lived National Conservatory of Music. It was here that Dvořák experienced African-American and Native American music, some of which would influence his most successful composition, the Symphony No. 9, "From the New World." Yet he also composed ten operas, including *Rusalka*, and was puzzled that his success as a symphonic composer seemed to prevent him from being taken seriously as an opera composer beyond his native Bohemia. Jaroslav Kvapil (1868–1950) was a Czech author and poet. He wrote the libretto for *Rusalka* before meeting Dvořák, who became enthusiastic about the work when the director of the National Theater in Prague showed it to him.

### *The Setting*

The opera takes place in an unspecified fairy-tale setting. Contrasting unspoiled and “honest” nature (the woods and lake of the framing acts) with corrupt human culture (the Prince’s palace in Act II) was a favorite theme of Romantic artists.

### *The Music*

The orchestral score of *Rusalka* is magically evocative, particularly for the passages depicting the forest and the lake in Acts I and III. These scenes are effectively contrasted with the bright brass flourishes depicting the glittering court of the prince. The vocal writing is built around emotional outbursts riding waves of orchestral sound, notably in the final confrontation between the hero and heroine: rather than a standard duet with both characters singing at once, each of them sings straightforward phrases that capture the irreconcilable states of these estranged characters. As opposed to some of his contemporaries, Dvořák did not shy away from writing arias and set pieces where the flow of the drama warranted. Besides the soprano’s ravishing “Song to the Moon,” famous from concerts and recitals long before the rest of the opera was known outside of the Czech world, there is the mezzo’s humorous Act I solo and even a straightforward (though ironic) bridal chorus in Act II. Additional contrast, expressed in a folkloric style, is provided by the servants in Act II. These various strands—impressionist, stately, rustic—are interwoven throughout the opera to illustrate the many dimensions of the story.

### *Met History*

*Rusalka* came to the Met in 1993 in a production by Otto Schenk, with John Fiore conducting the Slovak soprano Gabriela Beňačková in the title role and a cast that also included Neil Rosenshein, Janis Martin, Dolora Zajick, and Sergei Koptchak. Ben Heppner sang the Prince for five performances in that original run. Renée Fleming first took on the title role in 1997 and most recently returned to it in 2014. Mary Zimmerman’s new production, with Kristine Opolais, Brandon Jovanovich, Eric Owens, and Katarina Dalayman leading the cast and Sir Mark Elder on the podium, opened February 2, 2017.

## Program Note

When Antonín Dvořák returned home from the United States in 1895, he reveled in his native Czech culture. Two and a half years at the National Conservatory of Music in New York, where he was asked to introduce “the realm of a new, independent art, in short a national style of music,” had inspired him to reconsider his own nation’s art. At first, there came a series of orchestral tone poems based on ballads by the esteemed poet Karel Jaromír Erben. And then there emerged two new operas, *The Devil and Kate*, inspired by local fairy tales, and *Rusalka*, a decidedly Czech spin on the story of a water nymph turned human, made famous by Hans Christian Andersen’s *The Little Mermaid*. This post-Wagnerian fable, with a ravishingly symphonic score, was to become Dvořák’s most popular opera, yet it also contains a poignant—and politically pertinent—allegory about giving voice to the voiceless.

Dvořák’s late works, imbued with the atmosphere of Bohemia’s woods and fields—to paraphrase the title of a tone poem by his colleague (and rival) Bedřich Smetana—were his attempt to answer what it meant to be Czech. During the 19th century, when nationalist concerns were on the rise in the constituent crown lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, questions of nationhood were crucial. Working in the U.S., Dvořák had hankered for his homeland, especially his countryside retreat of Vysoká. And yet his work had not always been well received in Bohemia, with numerous zealous patriots among the musical cognoscenti considering him not patriotic enough, especially when he chose to associate with musicians and critics from Vienna and the Berlin-based publishers Simrock. “Smetana was a thousand times the more potent artist,” critic Zdeněk Nejedlý remarked, “since he never sold off his art, in which nationality was a basic element, in return for a little success abroad.”

It was perhaps with such thoughts in mind that Dvořák followed in Smetana’s footsteps when he returned home in 1895. The late composer’s six-part *Má vlast* (1874–79) had celebrated the Czech lands and legends in musical form, and Dvořák emulated those prized compositions in *The Water Goblin*, *The Noon Witch*, *The Golden Spinning-Wheel*, and *The Wild Dove*. Each of his four so-called orchestral ballads was based on a text from Erben’s *Garland of National Tales*, a seminal text during the Czech National Revival. In an era in which industrialization drove so many people into the towns and cities, the Czech countryside and its mythology had a magical hold over the nation’s imagination. Erben’s *Garland*, well known through various editions since its first publication in 1853, as well as numerous paintings based on the ballads, tapped into that evocative world and likewise influenced numerous other poets and playwrights. They included Jaroslav Kvapil, the librettist of *Rusalka*:

There is much of the Czech folk element in my fairy tale, and in spirit and form I have tried to follow the unsurpassable example set by our ballads. My fairy tale is much closer to Erben, to his *Lily*, his *Water Goblin*, and *The Golden Spinning-Wheel*, than



to many foreign models. It is perhaps this very characteristic of my work that led that great master of the arts, Dvořák, to choose it.

Kvapil arguably overdoes the patriotism in this *post facto* account of the gestation of *Rusalka*, which was, in part, inspired by a trip to Denmark during the summer of 1899, when he re-read much of Hans Christian Andersen's output, including *The Little Mermaid*. As well as that beloved text, Kvapil also referred to Friedrich de la Motte Foqué's novella *Undine*, the stimulus for operas by E.T.A. Hoffmann, Albert Lortzing, and Tchaikovsky, as well as the contemporary German playwright Gerhart Hauptmann's verse drama *The Sunken Bell*. "This complex inspiration," Kvapil wrote, "gave rise to a new fairy tale about the love of the water-nymph Rusalka for a prince—a human being—for whom she resolves to forsake her native lake." His libretto, however, was lacking a suitable composer.

Having completed his dramatic orchestral pieces in 1896, Dvořák began to cast around for fresh ideas for the theatre, convinced that opera was an essential concern for any patriotic composer.

I wanted to devote all my powers, as long as the dear Lord gives me health, to the creation of opera. Not, however, out of any vain desire for theatrical glory, but because I consider opera to be the most suitable medium for the nation. The music is listened to by the widest audience. ... I am regarded as a symphonist, yet I proved many years ago that my main leaning is toward dramatic creation.

First came a sweeping revision to his earlier opera, *The Jacobin*, and then *The Devil and Kate*, first seen at Prague's National Theatre on November 23, 1899. It was the director of that institution, František Adolf Šubert, who handed Kvapil's *Rusalka* to Dvořák in March 1900, following the suggestion of fellow composer Josef Bohuslav Foerster. "Dvořák could work real miracles with your libretto," he had told Kvapil. "A few days ago, I heard his symphonic poem *The Wood Dove*, rich with rare poetry and tones that are akin to your work."

Dvořák was duly enchanted by Kvapil's text and set to work immediately, composing with feverish intent. According to his pupil and son-in-law, the violinist and composer Josef Suk, Dvořák composed the entirety of *Rusalka* without resorting to the piano, only occasionally playing through what he had written each day. Act I was completed by June 27, 1900, with its evocative Prelude finished within the next 24 hours. Dvořák then polished off Act II on September 4 that same year, reaching the end of Act III on November 27, when he played the whole score to his daughter Otilka, as well as Suk. Hearing its final bars, when the Prince slips lifelessly out of Rusalka's arms into the depths of the lake, Otilka was found in floods of tears. "See?" Dvořák said to her, "imagine how I felt when I wrote it!"

As with *The Devil and Kate*, a palpably Wagnerian vein runs through much of *Rusalka*. Particularly redolent of Wagner's music dramas is the psychological

commentary provided by the orchestra and the score's network of recurrent motifs. Much of the most important thematic material is introduced in the Prelude to Act I, with its dark and fatalistic murmurings sounding low in the orchestra. This is followed by a more yearning theme, led by the woodwinds and upper strings. The juxtaposition of these ideas, the former representing the wicked Ježibaba (herself related to the character and musical spirit of *The Noon Witch*) and the latter signifying Rusalka, is accentuated throughout the opening scene. We are made palpably aware of the title character's innocently seductive lyricism, especially in her enduring "Song to the Moon," making her later silence all the more tragic.

Here, too, a trio of wood sprites seem to recall Wagner's three Rhine maidens from *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, while the Water Gnome Vodník has a kinship with Wagner's Alberich as well as his Czech compatriot in the fourth of Dvořák's own orchestral ballads, *The Water Goblin*. Yet while the music of the rhapsodic Rusalka, characterised by muted strings, clarinets, English horn, and harp, and of the Prince, with his hunting horn tropes, might sound like Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* at times—certainly harmonically speaking—Dvořák's forest is manifestly Czech. Like Kvapil's libretto, the score may suggest numerous international sources, but it places them within a specifically nationalistic, rural setting.

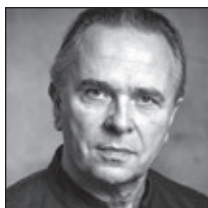
The musical characterization of Rusalka's woodland home contrasts with the imperious music of Act II, with its specifically "foreign" princess. Despite the story's fairy-tale veneer, the tension between these two worlds reflects the political situation of Dvořák's homeland at the time, situated within an empire ruled from Vienna and in which the Czechs often distrusted the aristocracy. In the brash light of the Prince's castle, Rusalka's moonlit lyricism fades. It is only by returning to the Czech forest that the beauty of Dvořák's score returns, as he again gives voice to his voiceless heroine. And it is to her melancholy music, with its ululating harp and yearning woodwinds, that the Prince eventually yields, his distinctive and patrician hunting horns vanishing in the orchestral texture.

*Rusalka* was first seen at the National Theatre in Prague on March 31, 1901. Sitting in a building whose motto, emblazoned over the proscenium arch, was "From the Nation to Itself," that early audience would no doubt have gleaned the allegorical nature of Dvořák's opera. With *Rusalka*, Dvořák had finally created an opera that the Czech people could take to their hearts, eager for the day when political and cultural independence would grant them a voice as eloquent as that of Rusalka.

—Gavin Plumley

Gavin Plumley, commissioning editor of English-language program notes for the Salzburg Festival, specializes in the music and culture of Central Europe. He appears frequently on the BBC and has written for publications around the world.

# The Cast and Creative Team



## Sir Mark Elder

CONDUCTOR (HEXHAM, ENGLAND)

**THIS SEASON** *Rusalka* at the Met, *Carmen* at the Paris Opera, numerous appearances with the Hallé Orchestra, and guest conducting engagements with leading orchestras around the world. **MET APPEARANCES** *Madama Butterfly*, *Tannhäuser*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Otello*, *Mefistofele*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* (debut, 1988).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** He has been music director of the Hallé Orchestra since September 2000. He was music director of English National Opera from 1979 to 1993, principal guest conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra from 1992 to 1995, and music director of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra from 1989–1994. He has also held positions as principal guest conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the London Mozart Players. He works regularly in the most prominent international opera houses, including Covent Garden, the Paris Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Glyndebourne Festival. Other engagements have taken him to the Bayreuth Festival, Munich, Amsterdam, Zurich, Geneva, Berlin, and the Bregenz Festival. He is a principal artist of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and works regularly with the London Symphony Orchestra, and he appears annually at the BBC Proms.



## Mary Zimmerman

DIRECTOR (LINCOLN, NEBRASKA)

**THIS SEASON** *Rusalka* at the Met, *Wonderful Town* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre, and *The Odyssey* (adaptation and direction) with Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

**MET PRODUCTIONS** *Armida*, *La Sonnambula*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** She is the recipient of a 1998 MacArthur Fellowship, the 2002 Tony Award for Best Director of a Play (for *Metamorphoses*), and numerous Joseph Jefferson Awards (including Best Production and Best Direction). She is the Manilow Resident Director of Goodman Theatre, a member of Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company, and a professor of performance studies at Northwestern University. Works which she has adapted and directed include *Treasure Island* (Lookingglass, Berkeley Rep.), *Argonautika* (Lookingglass, Berkeley Rep., Shakespeare Theatre Co., McCarter Theatre), *Mirror of the Invisible World* (Goodman), *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* (Goodman, BAM, Seattle Rep., Second Stage), *The Odyssey* (Lookingglass, Goodman, McCarter, Seattle Rep.), *Arabian Nights* (Lookingglass, MTC, BAM), *Journey to the West* (Goodman, Huntington, Berkeley Rep.), *Metamorphoses* (Broadway, Lookingglass, Seattle Rep., Berkeley Rep., Mark Taper Forum, Second Stage), *Secret in the Wings* (Lookingglass, Berkeley Rep., McCarter, Seattle Rep.), *S/M* (Lookingglass),

## The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

*Eleven Rooms of Proust* (Lookingglass, About Face), and a new opera with Philip Glass, *Galileo Galilei* (Goodman, London's Barbican, and BAM) for which she co-wrote the libretto.



### Daniel Ostling

SET DESIGNER (CHICAGO, ILLINOIS)

**THIS SEASON** *Rusalka* at the Met, *A Christmas Carol* at Princeton University's McCarter Theatre and Mike Bartlett's *King Charles III* in Seattle with Shakespeare Theatre Company.

**MET PRODUCTIONS** *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** He works extensively with director Mary Zimmerman, having designed numerous productions including *Metamorphoses*, for which he was nominated for a 2002 Tony Award, and he is an ensemble member of Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company and an Associate Professor at Northwestern University. Design highlights include *Timon of Athens* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *All the Days* (McCarter), *Blood Wedding* (Lookingglass), *King Lear* (California Shakespeare Theater), *Let There Be Love* (American Conservatory Theater), *Title & Deed* (Lookingglass), *Guys and Dolls* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Baskerville* (Arena Stage, McCarter, Philadelphia Theatre), *Amadeus* (Chicago Shakespeare), *The Brothers Karamazov* (Lookingglass), *Eurydice* (Victory Gardens in Chicago), *Arabian Nights* (Berkeley Repertory), *UP* (Steppenwolf Theatre), *The Glorious Ones* (Lincoln Center), and *Argonautika* (Berkeley Rep., Shakespeare Theatre, McCarter). Opera designs include Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* and Robert Zuidam's *Rage d'Amour* (Tanglewood Music Festival, Los Angeles Philharmonic) and Philip Glass's *Galileo Galilei* (BAM, London's Barbican Centre).



### Mara Blumenfeld

COSTUME DESIGNER (PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA)

**THIS SEASON** *Rusalka* at the Met and Mike Bartlett's *King Charles III* with Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

**MET PRODUCTIONS** *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** A frequent collaborator with Mary Zimmerman, she has designed costumes for her productions of *Metamorphoses* (Broadway, Second Stage), *Guys and Dolls* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *The Jungle Book* (Chicago's Goodman Theatre), *Candide* (Goodman, Boston's Huntington Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company), *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* (Second Stage), *Measure for Measure* (NYSF/Public Theater), *The Odyssey* and *The Secret in the Wings* (McCarter Theatre), *Pericles* (Washington's Shakespeare Theatre),

the tour of *The Arabian Nights*, and Philip Glass's operas *Akhnaten* and *Galileo Galilei*. Other New York credits include *The Glorious Ones* at Lincoln Center Theater, *Homebody/Kabul* (BAM) and *Lookingglass Alice* (New Victory). Based in Chicago, her work includes numerous productions for the Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, and Lookingglass Theatre Company, where she is an ensemble member and has designed costumes for more than 30 productions. She is the recipient of three Joseph Jefferson Awards, a TCG Design Fellowship, and the 2012 Michael Merritt Award for Excellence in Design and Collaboration.



### T.J. Gerckens

LIGHTING DESIGNER (COLUMBUS, OHIO)

**THIS SEASON** *Rusalka* at the Met and *Wonderful Town* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre.

**MET PRODUCTIONS** *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (debut, 2007).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** He has been part of Mary Zimmerman's design team for more than 20 years, and he has received numerous awards, including a Drama Desk Award and Lortel Awards for his lighting of *Metamorphoses* on and off Broadway, 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 lighting designs have also been seen at the New York Shakespeare Festival, BAM, Lincoln Center's SeriousFun! Festival, Second Stage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Chicago's Goodman Theater, Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, Berkeley Rep., Melbourne Theatre Company, Central Ohio's CATCO (where he served as managing director), and Seattle Rep., among others. He is also a lighting design professor at Otterbein University.



### Austin McCormick

CHOREOGRAPHER (SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA)

**THIS SEASON** *Rusalka* for his debut at the Met and numerous performances with his own Company XIV.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** He is the founder, choreographer, and artistic director of Company XIV, which performs works that combine classical dance and baroque styles with burlesque elements. He was the winner of a 2015 Drama Desk Award for outstanding choreography, the 2011 Robert L.B. Tobin Director-Designer Grant from *Opera America* for New Directors in Opera, and the winner of the 2010 New York Innovative Theatre Award for best choreography.

## The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

His work in opera includes the American premiere of Cavalli's *Eliogabalo* with Gotham Chamber Opera and *La Traviata* with Chicago Lyric Opera. He holds a BFA from the Juilliard School and is a graduate of the Conservatory of Baroque Dance. He is also an alumnus of the Harid Conservatory and North Carolina School of the Arts.



**Jamie Barton**

MEZZO-SOPRANO (ROME, GEORGIA)

**THIS SEASON** Fenena in *Nabucco* and Ježibaba in *Rusalka* at the Met, Waltraute and Second Norn in *Götterdämmerung* at Houston Grand Opera, Eboli in *Don Carlo* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Fricka in *Das Rheingold* with the New York Philharmonic.

**MET APPEARANCES** Giovanna Seymour in *Anna Bolena*, Adalgisa in *Norma*, and Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* (debut, 2009).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** She was the winner of the 2015 Richard Tucker Award and the 2013 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition, and was a 2007 winner of the Met's National Council Auditions. She is the 2017 recipient of the Met's Beverly Sills Artist Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman. She has recently sung Fenena at Covent Garden and the Seattle Opera, Adalgisa at the LA Opera and San Francisco Opera, Waltraute at the Washington National Opera, Cornelia in *Giulio Cesare* in Frankfurt, Elizabeth Proctor in Robert Ward's *The Crucible* at Glimmerglass Opera, Giovanna Seymour with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Fricka in *Das Rheingold* with Houston Grand Opera, and Azucena in *Il Trovatore* with the Cincinnati Opera. She has also appeared at Japan's Saito Kinen Festival, with Opera Memphis, the Bavarian State Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and Opera Theatre of St. Louis.



**Katarina Dalayman**

SOPRANO (STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN)

**THIS SEASON** Foreign Princess in *Rusalka* at the Met and Herodias in *Salome*, Fricka in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, and Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung* at the Royal Swedish Opera.

**MET APPEARANCES** Kundry in *Parsifal*; Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*; Isolde and Brangäne (debut, 1999) in *Tristan und Isolde*; the Duchess of Parma in Busoni's *Doktor Faust*; Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*; Lisa in *The Queen of Spades*; and Marie in *Wozzeck*.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Recent performances include Elisabetta in *Maria Stuarda*, Kundry, and Brangäne at the Royal Swedish Opera; Brangäne at the Greek National Opera; Ortrud in *Lohengrin* in Amsterdam; and Brünnhilde at the Bavarian State Opera. She has also sung the title roles of *Elektra* and *Carmen*, Maddalena in *Andrea Chénier*, and Brünnhilde in *Ring* performances at the Royal Swedish Opera; Brünnhilde in *Siegfried* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival; Desdemona in *Otello*, Eva in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* in Stuttgart; Brünnhilde in *Ring* performances at the Vienna State Opera; Marie at Covent Garden and in Paris; Ariadne in *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Paris, Brussels, Dresden, and Munich; Judith in *Bluebeard's Castle* at Covent Garden; and Kundry at the Paris Opera.



**Kristine Opolais**  
SOPRANO (RIGA, LATVIA)

**THIS SEASON** Mimi in *La Bohème*, the title roles of *Manon Lescaut* and *Rusalka*, and the 50th Anniversary Gala at the Met, Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* at the Vienna State Opera, the title role of *Tosca* in Baden-Baden, and *Rusalka* at the Bavarian State Opera.

**MET APPEARANCES** Cio-Cio-San, Mimi, and Magda in *La Rondine* (debut, 2013).

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Cio-Cio-San, the title role of *Tosca*, and *Manon Lescaut* at Covent Garden; Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito*, *Manon Lescaut*, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Cio-Cio-San, Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra*, Margherita and Helen of Troy in Boito's *Mefistofele*, and Rachel in Halévy's *La Juive* at the Bavarian State Opera; Mimi at the Vienna State Opera and the Berlin Staatsoper; *Rusalka* at the Paris Opera; the title role of *Jenůfa* in Zurich; and Nedda in *Pagliacci* at La Scala. In her hometown of Riga, she has sung Katerina Ismailova in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Violetta* in *La Traviata*, Lisa in *The Queen of Spades*, and the title role of *Aida*.



**Brandon Jovanovich**  
TENOR (BILLINGS, MONTANA)

**THIS SEASON** Prince in *Rusalka* at the Met, Don José in *Carmen* and Sergei in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* at the Vienna State Opera, *Énée* in *Les Troyens* and Don José with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Siegmund in *Die Walküre* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, and the title role of *Lohengrin* in Zurich.

**MET APPEARANCES** Sergei in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and Don José (debut, 2010).

## The Cast and Creative Team CONTINUED

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Recent performances include the Drum Major in *Wozzeck* in London and Zurich, Don José at the Bavarian State Opera and Opera Australia, Walther von Stolzing in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at San Francisco Opera and the Paris Opera, and Des Grieux in *Manon Lescaut* at the Bavarian State Opera. He has also sung Walter in Weinberg's *The Passenger* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Florestan in *Fidelio* in Zurich, the Prince at Lyric Opera of Chicago and Glyndebourne Festival, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with LA Opera, and Sam in Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*, the title role of *Lohengrin*, Froh in *Das Rheingold*, and Siegmund with the San Francisco Opera.



**Eric Owens**

BASS-BARITONE (PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA)

**THIS SEASON** Jaufré Rudel in *L'Amour de Loin*, the Water Gnome in *Rusalka*, and Voice of Neptune in *Idomeneo* at the Met; Wotan in *Das Rheingold* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; and Tsar Dodon in *The Golden Cockerel* at Santa Fe Opera.

**MET APPEARANCES** Orest in *Elektra*, General Leslie Groves in *Doctor Atomic* (debut, 2008), Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Alberich in the *Ring* cycle.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* conducted by Simon Rattle and staged by Peter Sellars at the Lucerne Festival, the BBC Proms, and Park Avenue Armory; Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* and the Water Sprite in *Rusalka* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer* at Washington National Opera; King Philip in *Don Carlo* in Philadelphia; the title role of *Macbeth* at the Glimmerglass Festival; and Alberich at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and Vienna State Opera. He has also sung General Leslie Groves with the San Francisco Opera (world premiere) and Lyric Opera of Chicago; Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* and Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* at Los Angeles Opera; Oroveso in *Norma* at Covent Garden; an evening of jazz standards at the Kennedy Center; and a series of concerts as artist-in-residence at the New York Philharmonic.