

GIUSEPPE VERDI

OTELLO

CONDUCTOR
Gustavo Dudamel

PRODUCTION
Bartlett Sher

SET DESIGNER
Es Devlin

COSTUME DESIGNER
Catherine Zuber

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Donald Holder

PROJECTION DESIGNER
Luke Halls

REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR
Gina Lapinski

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in four acts

Libretto by Arrigo Boito, based on
the play by William Shakespeare

Saturday, January 5, 2019
1:00–4:00PM

The production of *Otello* was made possible by
a generous gift from **Jacqueline Desmarais,**
in memory of Paul G. Desmarais Sr.

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The Metropolitan Opera

2018–19 SEASON

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The 344th Metropolitan Opera performance of
GIUSEPPE VERDI'S

OTELLO

CONDUCTOR
Gustavo Dudamel

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

MONTANO
Jeff Mattsey

A HERALD
Kidon Choi**

CASSIO
Alexey Dolgov

LODOVICO
James Morris

IAGO
Željko Lučić

RODERIGO
Chad Shelton

OTELLO
Stuart Skelton

DESDEMONA
Sonya Yoncheva

EMILIA
Jennifer Johnson Cano*

Saturday, January 5, 2019, 1:00–4:00PM



Stuart Skelton in the title role and Sonya Yoncheva as Desdemona in Verdi's *Otello*

Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**

Fight Director **B. H. Barry**

Musical Preparation **Dennis Giauque, Howard Watkins*, J. David Jackson, and Carol Isaac**

Assistant Stage Directors **Shawna Lucey and Paula Williams**

Stage Band Conductor **Gregory Buchalter**

Prompter **Carol Isaac**

Italian Coach **Hemdi Kfir**

Met Titles **Sonya Friedman**

Children's Chorus Director **Anthony Piccolo**

Assistant Scenic Designer, Properties **Scott Laule**

Assistant Costume Designers **Ryan Park and Wilberth Gonzalez**

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Costumes executed by **Metropolitan Opera Costume Department; Angels the Costumiers, London; Das Gewand GmbH, Düsseldorf; and Seams Unlimited, Racine, Wisconsin**

Wigs and Makeup executed by **Metropolitan Opera Wig and Makeup Department**

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

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

Met Titles

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TOP TEN

Introducing *Aria Code*, a new ten-podcast series that explores some of the greatest arias in the repertoire



Rhiannon Giddens, with portrait of Leontyne Price, on a recent backstage tour of the Met

PHOTOS: JONATHAN TICHLER/MET OPERA; PAOLA KUDACKI/MET OPERA

Internationally acclaimed folk musician Rhiannon Giddens has won a Grammy Award, performed for President Obama, and been awarded a MacArthur “genius” grant, among many other accolades. But before all that, she studied to be an opera singer. So it’s fitting that the North Carolina-born artist is now the host of a new ten-part podcast series, *Aria Code*, a collaboration of the Met and New York’s classical music station WQXR, in which she gets to revisit her original musical passion. Each of the podcast episodes features a star opera singer—starting with soprano Diana Damrau, followed by tenor Vittorio Grigolo and eight others, including the legendary Plácido Domingo—talking through the ins and outs of one specific aria, with special guests providing additional color.



“What we’re doing is really digging into each aria,” says Giddens. “We’re talking to singers, scientists, historians, and other kinds of specialists to unpack what’s going on in one particular aria. It’s really exciting to get to spend the time with one story within an opera. It’s a cool idea.”

Aria Code can be heard on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and wherever else podcasts are available. Learn more at ariacode.org.

Synopsis

Act I

Cyprus, late 19th century. During a violent storm, the people of Cyprus await the return of their governor, the Moor Otello, general of the Venetian fleet. He has been fighting the Muslim Turks and guides his victorious navy to safe harbor. In his absence, the young Venetian Roderigo has arrived in Cyprus and fallen in love with Otello's new wife, Desdemona. Otello's ensign Iago, who secretly hates the governor for promoting the officer Cassio over him, promises Roderigo to help win her. While the citizens celebrate their governor's return, Iago launches his plan to ruin Otello. Knowing that Cassio gets drunk easily, Iago proposes a toast. Cassio declines to drink but abandons his scruples when Iago salutes Desdemona, who is a favorite of the people. Iago then goads Roderigo into provoking a fight with Cassio, who is now fully drunk. Montano, the former governor, tries to separate the two, and Cassio attacks him as well. Chaos erupts. Otello appears and restores order, furious about his soldiers' behavior. When he realizes that the commotion has also disturbed his young bride, he takes away Cassio's recent promotion and dismisses everyone. Otello and Desdemona reaffirm their love.

Act II

Iago advises Cassio to present his case to Desdemona, arguing that her influence on Otello will secure his rehabilitation. Alone, Iago reveals his bleak, nihilistic view of humankind. He makes dismissive remarks about Desdemona's fidelity to Otello, whose jealousy is easily aroused. When Desdemona arrives and appeals to her husband on Cassio's behalf, Otello is instantly suspicious. Evading her question, Otello complains of the loss of his peace of mind. Desdemona offers him a handkerchief to cool his brow, but he tosses it to the ground. Emilia, Iago's wife and Desdemona's maidservant, retrieves it, but Iago quickly seizes the handkerchief from her. Left alone with Otello, Iago fans the flames of the governor's suspicions by inventing a story of how Cassio had spoken of Desdemona in his sleep and how he saw her handkerchief in Cassio's hand. Seething with jealousy, Otello is now convinced that his wife is unfaithful. The two men join in an oath to punish Cassio and Desdemona.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 2:10PM)

Act III

Iago's plot continues to unfold as he tells Otello that he will have further proof of Desdemona and Cassio's betrayal. When, moments later, Desdemona approaches Otello and once again pleads for Cassio, Otello insists on seeing the missing handkerchief, which he had once given her as a gift. When she cannot produce it, he insults her as a whore. Alone, he gives in to his desperation

and self-pity. Iago returns with Cassio, and Otello hides to eavesdrop on their conversation, which Iago cleverly leads in such a way that Otello is convinced that they are discussing Cassio's affair with Desdemona. Cassio mentions an unknown admirer's gift and produces the telltale handkerchief—in fact, planted by Iago in his room. Otello is shattered and vows that he will kill his wife. Iago promises to have Roderigo deal with Cassio.

A delegation from Venice arrives to recall Otello home and to appoint Cassio as the new governor of Cyprus. At this news, Otello loses control and explodes in a rage, hurling insults at Desdemona in front of the assembled crowd. He orders everyone away before collapsing. As the Cypriots are heard from outside praising Otello as the "Lion of Venice," Iago gloats over him, "Behold the Lion!"

Act IV

Emilia helps the distraught Desdemona prepare for bed. She has just finished saying her evening prayers when Otello enters and wakes her with a kiss to tell her that he is about to kill her. Desdemona again protests her innocence, but Otello coldly smothers her. Emilia runs in with news that Cassio has killed Roderigo. Iago's plot is finally revealed, and Otello realizes what he has done. Reflecting on his past glory, he pulls out a dagger and stabs himself, dying with a final kiss for his wife.



Otello on Demand

Looking for more *Otello*? Check out **Met Opera on Demand**, our online streaming service, to enjoy other outstanding performances from past Met seasons—including a 1958 radio broadcast featuring Mario del Monaco, Victoria del los Angeles, and Leonard Warren; two thrilling telecasts starring Plácido Domingo in the title role; and the 2015 *Live in HD* transmission, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin, the Met's new Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer Music Director. Start your seven-day free trial and explore the full catalog of nearly 700 complete performances at metoperaondemand.org.

Giuseppe Verdi

Otello

Premiere: Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 1887

Often cited as Italian opera's greatest tragedy, *Otello* is a miraculous union of music and drama, a masterpiece as profound philosophically as it is thrilling theatrically. The writer and composer Arrigo Boito carefully molded Shakespeare's tale of an outsider, a great hero who can't control his jealousy, into a taut and powerful libretto. Verdi's supreme achievement in this work may be the title role, a pinnacle of the tenor repertory. All three lead roles are demanding—making the opera a challenge to produce—but the role of Otello in particular requires an astounding natural instrument capable of both powerful and delicate sounds, superb musical intelligence, and impressive acting abilities. *Otello* almost wasn't written: Following the success of *Aida* in 1871 and his setting of the Requiem Mass in 1874, Verdi considered himself retired, and it took Boito and publisher Giulio Ricordi several years to persuade him to take on a major new work.

The Creators

In an extraordinary career spanning six decades in the theater, Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) composed 28 operas, at least half of which are at the core of today's repertoire. His role in Italy's cultural and political development has made him an icon in his native country. Arrigo Boito (1842–1918) was also a composer (his opera *Mefistofele*, based on Goethe's *Faust*, premiered in 1868), as well as a journalist and critic. The plays of William Shakespeare (1564–1616) have inspired countless operatic interpretations. Verdi and Boito would turn to Shakespeare again after *Otello* for their final masterpiece, *Falstaff*.

The Setting

The opera is set on the island of Cyprus, originally in the late 15th century. (Boito jettisoned Shakespeare's Act I, set in Venice, for a tighter and more fluid drama.) The island itself represents an outpost of a European power (Venice) under constant attack from an encroaching, hostile adversary (the Turkish Empire). In a sense, the island of Cyprus could be said to echo Otello's outsider status: He is a foreigner (a "Moor," an uncertain term applied indiscriminately at that time to North African Arabs, black Africans, and others) surrounded by suspicious Europeans. The Met's current production, by Bartlett Sher, moves the action to the time of the opera's creation.

The Music

The score of *Otello* is remarkable for its overall intensity and dramatic insight rather than the memorable solo numbers that made Verdi's earlier works so popular. There are arias in this opera, most notably Desdemona's Willow Song and haunting "Ave Maria" in the last act and the baritone's "Credo in un Dio crudel" at the beginning of Act II. But equally important are the shorter vocal solos that cover considerable dramatic territory: The tenor's opening "Esultate!" in Act I is just a few measures long but reveals many facets of his character. Two notable duets, the tenor-soprano love duet that ends Act I and the tenor-baritone oath duet that concludes Act II, are remarkable examples of their respective forms. Throughout the score, the orchestra plays a diverse role unprecedented in Italian opera. In the opening storm scene, the power of nature is depicted with full forces, including an organ, playing at the maximum possible volume. In the Act I love duet, subtle psychological detail is revealed when the oboe and clarinet are seamlessly replaced by the darker English horn and bass clarinet as Otello's mind turns to painful memories. The very end of the opera belongs to the orchestra as well, with every instrument playing as softly as possible, pulsing like the last breaths of a dying being.

Met History

The great tenor Jean de Reszke sang the title role in the first two Met performances of *Otello* in 1891—the first of them on tour in Chicago. A new production in 1894 featured tenor Francesco Tamagno and baritone Victor Maurel (Verdi's choices for Otello and Iago at the world premiere in Milan). Conductor Arturo Toscanini, who had played cello in the orchestra in the world premiere, led 29 performances with the Met between 1909 and 1913, all of which starred Leo Slezak in the title role. Subsequent productions have been led by Ettore Panizza, with Elisabeth Rethberg, Giovanni Martinelli, and Lawrence Tibbett (1937); Georg Solti, with Gabriella Tucci, James McCracken, and Robert Merrill (1963); Karl Böhm, with Teresa Zylis-Gara, McCracken, and Sherrill Milnes (1972); and Valery Gergiev, in his Met debut, with Carol Vaness, Plácido Domingo, and Sergei Leiferkus (1994). Among the other great artists to have made a mark in the title role are Ramón Vinay, Mario Del Monaco, and Jon Vickers. Renata Tebaldi made her Met debut as Desdemona in 1955, and Kiri Te Kanawa was first heard here when she made her company debut in the same role on short notice in a 1974 Saturday matinee radio broadcast. Renée Fleming gave 21 memorable performances as Desdemona between 1994 and 2012. Bartlett Sher's production opened the company's 2015–16 season on September 21, 2015, starring Aleksandrs Antonenko, Sonya Yoncheva, and Željko Lučić, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin on the podium.

Program Note

Were it not for the intervention of publisher Giulio Ricordi, Verdi may never have written *Otello*. Following the premiere of *Aida* in 1871, the celebrated Italian composer decided to go into retirement. Barring the composition of his String Quartet and the Requiem—initially part of a tribute to Rossini and then completed in honor of Italian author Giuseppe Manzoni—Verdi steered clear of composition altogether. He was a happy and wealthy man in his sixties, no longer feeling the compunction to accept operatic commissions. And yet, as his publisher insisted, this was a waste of Verdi's incomparable talents.

Ricordi tried to lure his most successful composer out of retirement. It was not an easy task. Verdi was content to remain at home and survey the expanse of agricultural land he owned around his villa at Sant'Agata, just northeast of Parma. He was, moreover, disappointed by the new strand of cosmopolitanism emerging within the conservatories and theaters of Italy, though this did not stop him from traveling to Bologna to hear the 1871 Italian premiere of Wagner's *Lohengrin*. As to his own work, the completed Requiem, premiered in May 1874 and soon heard all over Europe, was perpetuating Verdi's fame and fortune, though he remained unmoved by the idea of writing more operas. And then, Ricordi had an ingenious idea: another stage work based on a play by Verdi's beloved Shakespeare (whose portrait still hangs in the composer's bedroom and study, just as he left it).

Having written *Macbeth* in 1846–47, Verdi had tried to adapt *King Lear*, but that tantalizing project sadly never came to fruition. Ricordi now suggested an opera based on another of Shakespeare's great tragedies: *Othello*. And rather than working with one of Verdi's established collaborators, Ricordi daringly suggested Arrigo Boito as a librettist. A controversial affiliate of the scapigliatura movement—the members of which were intent on reviving Italian art, literature, and music by means of foreign influences, not least Wagner—Boito had once offended Verdi by saying that his beloved Italian culture had been “defiled like the wall of a brothel.” The opinionated though highly talented Boito, himself a composer, then had his own fingers burned when his opera *Mefistofele* failed at its La Scala premiere in 1868. Revived seven years later, it was toned down considerably. Nonetheless, in suggesting Boito, Ricordi was clearly trying to reinvigorate the sexagenarian Verdi.

The composer slowly capitulated. After nearly a decade without a theatrical project, Verdi began work on his new musical drama, though not before trying Boito out on a thorough overhaul of the 1857 “fiasco” *Simon Boccanegra*. Suitably impressed by his revisions, the composer turned to Boito's proposed libretto for *Otello*, submitted in 1879. Gone was Shakespeare's first act, set in Venice, with its numerous tense discussions, particularly those featuring Desdemona's father, Brabantio, and his misgivings about her marriage to Othello. Boito distributed salient information from those scenes throughout his libretto, though he cut Brabantio's part entirely. Gone too are the repeated references to

Othello's race, though Boito was clearly aware of their importance, judging by his copious annotations and his preservation of the palpable tension between what he saw as African savagery and Mediterranean civility in Othello's character. Boldly adapting Shakespeare's tragedy, Boito created a well characterized, driven libretto, in which three figures dominate: the saintly Desdemona; Iago, the villain; and Othello, the hero brought low.

Verdi took until November 1886 to declare his score finished. What he created over those seven years was both a bold continuation of the Italian operatic tradition and a daring retort to the cultural influences pouring over the Alps. And he certainly matched Boito's flair for characterization, providing enticing roles for his singers, as Verdi himself explained.

Desdemona is a part in which the thread, the melodic line, never ceases from the first note to the last. Just as Iago has only to declaim and laugh mockingly and just as Othello, now the warrior, now the passionate lover, now crushed to the point of baseness, now ferocious like a savage, must sing and shout, so Desdemona must always, always sing.

With Othello's wife, Verdi created a truly beatific heroine, the victim of a venal, masculine world, whose "Ave Maria"—one of the few ideas Verdi borrowed from Rossini's earlier opera *Otello*—is emblematic of her untainted character. It is this purity that attracts Othello, who has an almost Freudian connection to this idealized (mother) figure, one promptly destroyed by the plotting Iago. Tellingly, the opera closes with a motif associated with that venerated love, the "bacio" (kiss) motif from the Act I love duet, reminding us of the destruction of Desdemona's innocence.

Iago is the polar opposite of this serene image. His music is declamatory and modern. Yet what makes Iago so brilliant is his chameleon-like ability to ape various musical styles and thereby influence those around him. It was not for nothing that Verdi and Boito originally considered naming the opera after him. According to Boito, Iago had to appear "easy and jovial with Cassio; ironic with Roderigo; apparently devoted towards Othello, brutal and threatening with Emilia; obsequious to Desdemona and Lodovico." He is all things to all people, though, as we find out at the opening to Act II, he believes "in a cruel God." Heralded by a fortissimo, chromatic fanfare—arguably the inspiration for the opening of Puccini's *Turandot*—this Credo features all the elements of Iago's style: disjointed intervals, uneven phrases, and hard triplet rhythms, all delivered with staccato snarls and accompanied by chilling trills. This is the devil in musical form and his insidiousness, like the motif that accompanies "È un'idra fosca" ("'Tis a spiteful monster"), snakes through the opera.

Caught between the saintly and the demonic, Othello is rendered helpless. Preying on his weakness for the radiant Desdemona, Iago puts in train Othello's

destruction. First, however, we see the celebrated warrior as the epitome of operatic heroism, as if he had ridden the storm alone—conjured in vivid, dissonant terms by Verdi—declaiming “Esultate!” (“Rejoice!”) at the very top of his range. His ardent heroism soon changes, however, to Iago-like declamation, as Otello repeats his ensign’s phrases in their Act II duet and then, more chillingly, reproduces Iago’s musical idiom in the parlando textures of the death scene. Exposed as a monster, the consequence of a cruel plot, Otello resumes a quasi-heroic tone in “Niun mi tema” but, like the last reprise of the “bacio” motif, it only serves to remind us just how far he has fallen.

The plausibility of this tragedy is further enhanced by the fluidity of its musical drama. Boito imbued the story with great pace and punch, moving away from the juxtaposition of “action” and “reflection” centered on recitative and aria forms that had previously dominated Italian opera. Verdi responded with a continuous musical structure in which such “numbers” are effortlessly subsumed. Sometimes, however, he deliberately breaks the flow. Rather than the through-composed sequence of storm, survival, carousing, and love duet in Act I, Iago’s Act II Credo, the great “Quell’innocente un fremito” ensemble at the end of Act III, and Desdemona’s scene at the beginning of Act IV are purposely separated and thereby highlighted. These comparatively static moments further underline the polarity between good and evil. At the end of Act III, as the entire ensemble is assembled on stage, Otello is caught betwixt and between, symbolized by the contrast between his dutiful declaration of the ducal document announcing Cassio as his successor and his barbed comments to Desdemona. An offstage chorus trumpets what Otello once was, while Iago’s sinister chromaticism pronounces what the great warrior has become.

When *Otello* first appeared at La Scala on February 5, 1887, it was a triumph. Verdi himself was not thrilled with the first performance, but that didn’t stop the tide of enthusiasm for the new work, with premieres following quickly throughout Europe, in New York (1888), and in London (1889). Written by the master who had brought *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata* to the world, *Otello* turned out to be the trigger for another exciting era in Italian opera. With its emotional verisimilitude, vivid characterization, and structural fluidity, *Otello* looks forward to verismo and Puccini. Coming out of retirement, Verdi was again the master of Italian opera. “Have the love, the passion, the anguish, and the hatred of human beings ever been presented to an audience with deeper insight or poignancy than in his music?” the English critic Francis Toye later asked. “I think not.”

—Gavin Plumley

Gavin Plumley, commissioning editor of English-language program notes for the Salzburg Festival, appears frequently on BBC Radio 3 and has written for newspapers, magazines, and opera and concert programs worldwide.

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The Cast

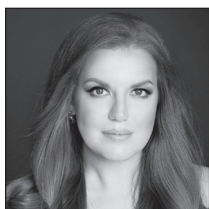


Gustavo Dudamel

CONDUCTOR (BARQUISIMETO, VENEZUELA)

THIS SEASON *Otello* for his debut at the Met and concerts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, and Mahler Chamber Orchestra. He also serves as Princeton University's 2018–19 artist in residence.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is in his tenth season as music director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and in his 19th year as music director of Venezuela's Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra. Between 2007 and 2012, he served as music director of Sweden's Gothenburg Symphony, where he currently holds the title of honorary conductor. He regularly works with young musicians in the El Sistema and Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA) programs. His operatic credits include *Otello*, *Tosca*, excerpts from *Die Zauberflöte*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Aida*, among others, with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; *La Bohème* at the Paris Opera and LA Opera; *West Side Story* at the Salzburg Festival; *Turandot* at the Vienna State Opera; *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *La Bohème*, and *L'Elisir d'Amore* at Staatsoper Berlin; *La Bohème*, *Rigoletto*, *Carmen*, and *Don Giovanni* at La Scala; *La Bohème* at Caracas's Teatro Teresa Carreño; and *Tannhäuser* at Ópera de Colombia.



Jennifer Johnson Cano

MEZZO-SOPRANO (ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI)

THIS SEASON Emilia in *Otello* and Meg Page in *Falstaff* at the Met, Offred in Poul Ruders's *The Handmaid's Tale* at Boston Lyric Opera, Bernstein's *Jeremiah* and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and recitals at Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall.

MET APPEARANCES Since her 2009 debut as a Bridesmaid in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, she has sung more than 100 performances of 13 roles, including Emilia, Nicklausse/The Muse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Meg Page, Wellgunde in *Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*, and Waltraute in *Die Walküre*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Orfeo in *Orfeo ed Euridice* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, the title role of *Carmen* and Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* at Boston Lyric Opera, Orphée in *Orphée et Eurydice* at Des Moines Metro Opera, Donna Elvira at Arizona Opera, and the world premieres of Mason Bates's *Afterlife* with the Phoenix Symphony and John Harbison's *Crossroads* with the La Jolla Music Society. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Sonya Yoncheva

SOPRANO (PLOVDIV, BULGARIA)

THIS SEASON Desdemona in *Otello* and the title role of *Iolanta* at the Met, the title roles of Cherubini's *Médée* and *Tosca* at Staatsoper Berlin, Desdemona in Baden-Baden and in concert with the Berlin Philharmonic, *Tosca* at the Paris Opera, *Violetta* in *La Traviata* at La Scala, the title role of *Norma* at the Bavarian State Opera, and *Médée* at the Salzburg Festival.

MET APPEARANCES The title roles of *Luisa Miller* and *Tosca*, *Mimi* in *La Bohème*, *Violetta*, Desdemona, and *Gilda* in *Rigoletto* (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include *Poppea* in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at the Salzburg Festival; *Imogene* in *Il Pirata* and *Mimi* at La Scala; *Elisabeth* in *Don Carlo* at the Paris Opera; *Stephana* in Giordano's *Siberia* in concert in Montpellier, France; *Tatiana* in *Eugene Onegin* at Deutsche Oper Berlin; *Antonia* in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Norma* at Covent Garden; and *Violetta* at the Bavarian State Opera. She has also sung the title role of Mascagni's *Iris* in concert in Montpellier, *Violetta* and *Iolanta* at the Paris Opera, *Mimi* and *Violetta* at Staatsoper Berlin, *Micaëla* in *Carmen* at Covent Garden, and the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in concert in Baden-Baden.



Alexey Dolgov

TENOR (MOSCOW, RUSSIA)

THIS SEASON Cassio in *Otello* at the Met, *Lenski* in *Eugene Onegin* at Washington National Opera, the title role of *Candide* at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, and the title role of Mascagni's *Silvano* in concert at Scottish Opera.

MET APPEARANCES *Lenski* and *Cassio* (debut, 2013).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He is a principal soloist at the Bolshoi Theatre, where his roles have included *Lenski*, *Likov* in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride*, the Prince in Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*, *Rodolfo* in *La Bohème*, *Alfredo* in *La Traviata*, and *Vladimir Igorevich* in *Prince Igor*. Recent performances include *Lenski* in Vancouver, *Edgardo* in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Greek National Opera, *Pinkerton* in *Madama Butterfly* at the Bavarian State Opera and Seattle Opera, *Edgardo* in concert and *Rodolfo* at the Israeli Opera, *Tsarevich Gvidon* in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Golden Cockerel* in Brussels, *Cassio* in Madrid, and *Alfredo* in Dresden. He has also sung *Nadir* in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, *Nemorino* in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and *Lenski* at the Israeli Opera; *Cassio* and *Lenski* in Barcelona; *Cavaradossi* in *Tosca* at Houston Grand Opera; *Pinkerton* in Montreal; and the title role in *Roberto Devereux* and *Lenski* at the Bavarian State Opera.



Željko Lučić

BARITONE (ZRENJANIN, SERBIA)

THIS SEASON Iago in *Otello*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, and Jack Rance in *La Fanciulla del West* at the Met; Seid in Verdi's *Il Corsaro* in concert in Frankfurt; Germont in *La Traviata* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Scarpia at Deutsche Oper Berlin; Don Carlo in *La Forza del Destino* and Scarpia at the Paris Opera; and Carlo Gérard in *Andrea Chénier* at the Bavarian State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 2006 debut as Barnaba in *La Gioconda*, he has sung more than 125 performances of 14 roles, including Scarpia, Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Jochanaan in *Salome*, Iago, and the title roles of *Rigoletto*, *Nabucco*, and *Macbeth*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, Rigoletto, and Germont at the Paris Opera; Macbeth, Iago, and Count di Luna at Covent Garden; Macbeth and Jochanaan at the Vienna State Opera; Rigoletto, the title roles of *Falstaff* and *Gianni Schicchi*, and Michele in *Il Tabarro* in Frankfurt; the title role of *Simon Boccanegra* and Scarpia at the Bavarian State Opera; Nabucco at Deutsche Oper Berlin and Lyric Opera of Chicago; Iago in Zurich; and Scarpia, Germont, and Rigoletto at La Scala.



James Morris

BASS-BARITONE (BALTIMORE, MARYLAND)

THIS SEASON Lodovico in *Otello* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 1971 debut as the King in *Aida*, he has sung more than 1,000 performances of 60 roles, including Wotan in the *Ring* cycle, Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Claggart in *Billy Budd*, Jacopo Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Claudius in *Hamlet*, Philip II in *Don Carlo*, Iago in *Otello*, Méphistophélès in *Faust*, and the title roles of *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Boris Godunov*, and *Don Giovanni*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS In recent seasons, he has sung Ben in Blitzstein's *Regina* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Dr. Schön/Jack the Ripper in *Lulu* and the Doctor in *Wozzeck* at English National Opera, the Old Doctor in *Vanessa* at the Santa Fe Opera, and the Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and Hans Sachs at Lyric Opera of Chicago. He has appeared at all the world's leading opera houses and with major orchestras of Europe and the United States. One of the leading interpreters of Wotan, he has sung the role in cycles at the Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and San Francisco Opera, among others.



Stuart Skelton

TENOR (SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Otello* and Siegmund in *Die Walküre* at the Met; the title role of *Peter Grimes* in concert with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra; Siegmund at Covent Garden, in Budapest, and in concert with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra; *Otello* in Baden-Baden; Siegmund and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra; and Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* with the Hallé.

MET APPEARANCES Tristan in *Tristan und Isolde*, Siegmund, and the Drum Major in *Wozzeck* (debut 2011).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Tristan in concert with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra; Florestan in *Fidelio* at La Scala and in concert at the BBC Proms; *Otello* in Bergen, Norway; Siegmund in Beijing; Peter Grimes in concert at the Edinburgh International Festival; Laca in *Jenůfa* at the Bavarian State Opera; and the title role of *Lohengrin* at the Paris Opera. He has also sung Siegmund at the Bavarian State Opera, Paris Opera, Opera Australia, Seattle Opera, and in concert in Baden-Baden and Oviedo, Spain; Tristan in Baden-Baden; the title role of *Parsifal* and Tristan at English National Opera; Samson in *Samson et Dalila* in concert in Bordeaux; and *Parsifal* in Zurich.

The New South Entrance



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*The South Entrance is made possible thanks to the generosity of
Betsy Z. Cohen and Edward E. Cohen.*