

GIUSEPPE VERDI

FALSTAFF

CONDUCTOR
Daniele Rustioni

PRODUCTION
Robert Carsen

SET DESIGNER
Paul Steinberg

COSTUME DESIGNER
Brigitte Reiffenstuel

LIGHTING DESIGNERS
Robert Carsen
Peter Van Praet

REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR
Gina Lapinski

MARIA MANETTI SHREM
GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in three acts

Libretto by Arrigo Boito, based on
the plays *The Merry Wives of Windsor*,
Henry IV, Part 1, and *Henry IV, Part 2*
by William Shakespeare

Saturday, April 1, 2023
12:30–3:25PM

Last time this season

The production of *Falstaff* was made possible by
a generous gift from the **Betsy and Ed Cohen/
Areté Foundation Fund for New Productions
& Revivals** and **Harry and Misook Doolittle**

Additional funding was received from
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Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London;
Teatro alla Scala, Milan; the Canadian Opera
Company, Toronto; and Dutch National Opera,
Amsterdam

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2022-23 SEASON

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This performance is also being broadcast live on Metropolitan Opera Radio on SiriusXM channel 355.

The 198th Metropolitan Opera performance of

GIUSEPPE VERDI'S

FALSTAFF

CONDUCTOR
Daniele Rustioni

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

DR. CAIUS
Carlo Bosi

NANNETTA
Hera Hyesang Park*

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF
Michael Volle

FENTON
Bogdan Volkov

BARDOLFO
Chauncey Packer

FORD
Christopher Maltman

PISTOLA
Richard Bernstein

MEG PAGE
Jennifer Johnson Cano*

ALICE FORD
Ailyn Pérez

MISTRESS QUICKLY
Marie-Nicole Lemieux

Saturday, April 1, 2023, 12:30–3:25PM

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Chorus Master **Donald Palumbo**
Musical Preparation **Donna Racik**, **Derrick Inouye**,
Dan Saunders, and **Howard Watkins***
Assistant Stage Directors **Sara Erde**, **Dylan Evans**, and
Jonathon Loy
Assistant to the Costume Designer **Zeb Lalljee**
Italian Diction Coach **Nicolò Sbuelz**
Prompter **Donna Racik**
Met Titles **Sonya Haddad**
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and
painted by **Royal Opera House Production Department**
and **Metropolitan Opera Shops**
Costumes constructed by **Royal Opera House Production**
Department; **Metropolitan Opera Costume Department**;
Das Gewand, **Düsseldorf**; and **Seams Unlimited**, **Racine**,
Wisconsin
Additional costumes by **Burnett's & Struth Scottish Regalia**
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Wigs and makeup constructed and executed by **Metropolitan**
Opera Wig and Makeup Department
Animals supervised by **All-Tame Animals, Inc.**

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Met Titles

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Development Program

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Synopsis

Act I

In and around Royal Windsor, England, in the 1950's. Dr. Caius bursts into Sir John Falstaff's room in the Garter Inn, accusing him of unseemly behavior the previous night. He further accuses Falstaff's two henchmen, Bardolfo and Pistola, of having robbed him while he was drunk, but the men quickly send him away. Falstaff contemplates the large bill that he has run up. He informs Bardolfo and Pistola that, in order to repair his finances, he plans to seduce Alice Ford and Meg Page, both wives of prosperous Windsor citizens. When the men refuse to deliver the letters that Falstaff has written to the two ladies, he ridicules their newly discovered sense of honor, before throwing them both out.

Alice and Meg laugh over the identical love letters that they have received from Falstaff. They share their amusement with Alice's daughter, Nannetta, and their friend Mistress Quickly. Ford arrives, followed by four men all proffering advice: Dr. Caius, whom Ford favors as Nannetta's future husband; Bardolfo and Pistola, who are now seeking advantageous employment from Ford; and Fenton, who is in love with Nannetta. When Ford learns of Falstaff's plan to seduce his wife, he immediately becomes jealous. While Alice and Meg plan how to take revenge on their importunate suitor, Ford decides to disguise himself in order to pay a visit to Falstaff. Unnoticed in the midst of all the commotion, Nannetta and Fenton manage to steal a few precious moments together.

Act II

Feigning penitence, Bardolfo and Pistola rejoin Falstaff's service. They show in Quickly, who informs Falstaff that both Alice and Meg are madly in love with him. She explains that it will be easier to seduce Alice, since her husband is out of the house every afternoon between two and three. Falstaff joyously anticipates his seduction of Alice. A "Mr. Fontana" (Ford in disguise) arrives, and to Falstaff's surprise, he offers him wine and money if he will seduce Alice Ford, explaining that he has long been in love with the lady but to no avail. If she were to be seduced by the more experienced Falstaff, she might then be more likely to fall a second time and accept Fontana. Falstaff informs his new friend that he already has a rendezvous with Alice that very afternoon. As Falstaff leaves to prepare himself, Ford gives way to jealous rage. When Falstaff returns, the two men exchange compliments before leaving together.

Alice, Meg, and Quickly are preparing for Falstaff's visit. Nannetta tearfully tells her mother that her father insists on her marrying Dr. Caius, but Alice tells her daughter not to worry. Falstaff arrives and begins his seduction. As Falstaff becomes more amorous, Meg Page interrupts the tête-à-tête, as planned, to announce (in jest) that Ford is approaching. But just at that point, Quickly suddenly returns in a panic to inform Alice that Ford really is on his way. As Ford rushes in with a group of townsfolk, the terrified

Falstaff hides in a large laundry basket. Fenton and Nannetta also hide. Ford and the other men ransack the house. Hearing the sound of kissing, Ford is convinced that he has found his wife and her lover together but is furious to discover Nannetta and Fenton instead. While Ford argues with Fenton, Alice instructs her servants to empty the laundry basket out of the window. To general hilarity, Falstaff lands in the River Thames.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 2:10PM)

Act III

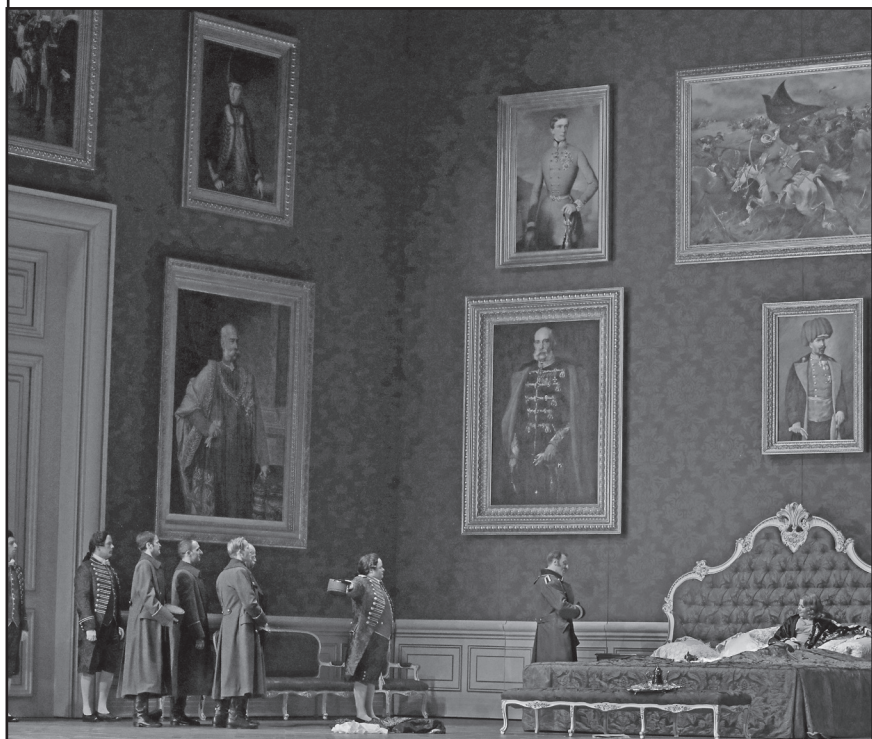
A wet and bruised Falstaff laments the wickedness of the world but soon cheers up with a glass of mulled wine. Quickly persuades him that Alice was innocent of the unfortunate incident at Ford's house. To prove that Alice still loves him, she proposes a new rendezvous that night in Windsor Great Park. In a letter that Quickly gives to Falstaff, Alice asks the knight to appear at midnight, disguised as the Black Huntsman. Ford, Nannetta, Meg, and Alice prepare the second part of their plot: Nannetta will be Queen of the Fairies and the others, also in disguise, will help to continue Falstaff's punishment. Ford secretly promises Caius that he will marry Nannetta that evening. Quickly overhears them.

As Fenton and Nannetta are reunited in the park, Alice explains her plan to trick Ford into marrying them. They all hide as Falstaff approaches. On the stroke of midnight, Alice appears. She declares her love but suddenly runs away, saying that she hears spirits approaching. Nannetta, disguised as the Queen of the Fairies, summons her followers, who attack the frightened Falstaff, pinching and poking him until he promises to give up his dissolute ways. In the midst of the assault, Falstaff suddenly recognizes Bardolfo and realizes that he has been tricked. While Ford explains that he was Fontana, Quickly scolds Falstaff for his attempts at seducing two virtuous women. Falstaff accepts that he has been made a figure of fun but points out that he remains the true source of wit in others. Dr. Caius now comes forward with a figure in white. Ford is to marry the pair. Alice brings forward another couple, who also receive Ford's blessing. When the brides remove their veils, it is revealed that Ford has just married Dr. Caius to Bardolfo—and more importantly, Fenton to Nannetta. With everyone now laughing at his expense, Ford has no choice but to forgive the lovers and bless their marriage. The entire company agrees that the whole world may be nothing but a jest filled with jesters, but he who laughs last, laughs best.

—Robert Carsen

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KEN HOWARD/MET OPERA

RICHARD STRAUSS

DER ROSENKAVALIER

Exhilarating soprano Lise Davidsen makes her role debut as the Marschallin in Strauss's poignant comedy. Simone Young conducts a sterling cast, which also stars soprano Erin Morley, mezzo-soprano Samantha Hankey, and bass Günther Groissböck.

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Giuseppe Verdi

Falstaff

Premiere: Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 1893

A deeply human comedy full of humor and genuine emotion, Verdi's last opera is a splendid finale to an unparalleled career in the theater. The story is an amalgamation of scenes from Shakespeare, primarily drawn from the comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. It centers on the remarkable personality of Sir John Falstaff, one of literature's most compelling characters: aging, vain, dishonest, a bit crass, prodigiously self-indulgent—but also curiously philosophical. The subject choice of a comedy based on Shakespeare was surprising for Verdi: While there are comic moments in several of his great tragedies, his only real comic opera had been *Un Giorno di Regno*, his second work for the stage and an utter failure more than 50 years earlier. *Falstaff's* supremely well-crafted score shows that the composer was continuing to grow as an artist even as he entered the ninth decade of his life. It is an astounding work and among the greatest operatic comedies of all time.

The Creators

In a remarkable career spanning six decades, Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) composed 26 operas, at least half of which are at the core of today's repertoire. Verdi's role in Italy's cultural and political development has made him an icon in his native country. The remarkable 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 a huge number of operatic interpretations. Before *Falstaff*, Verdi had already adapted *Macbeth* (1847, revised 1865) and *Otello* (1887, also with Boito as librettist).

The Setting

The opera is set in and around the town of Windsor, west of London. The historical references in Shakespeare's plays place the character of Sir John Falstaff in the first decades of the 15th century, although traditionally the opera has often been set in Shakespeare's time, two centuries later. The current Met production places the action in mid-20th-century England, after the Second World War—an era when long-established social norms were rapidly changing and the aristocracy lost much of their wealth and influence.

The Music

Falstaff marks a stylistic departure for Verdi and occupies a category of its own, without parallels in the history of the genre. The musical ideas come fast and abundantly, moving from one to the next organically and without discernible breaks. The text is of primary importance, and while this could also be said for other operas, what makes *Falstaff* unique is the abundance of lyricism within a structure that almost completely avoids traditional arias. The orchestra carries the story and occasionally makes colorful comments on the action, while at other times, it represents the overall spirit of the proceedings, such as in the remarkable prelude to Act III, which contains all the sweeping crescendo of a Rossini overture in less than a minute. Several brief but notable vocal solos stand out, among them the title character's playfully comic recollection of his youth in Act II and his melancholy soliloquy on aging in Act III, as well as the young Fenton's serenade in the last scene. But the bulk of the singing happens in ensembles that, despite their highly sophisticated musical structure, seem as natural as speech and adhere perfectly to the lines of the text. The complex counterhythms of the ensemble that ends Act I are both funny and the perfect depiction of people at cross-purposes. The opera's celebrated finale is a fugue in which all the characters take part, each one both a perpetrator and the butt of the "great joke of life" that Falstaff evokes in his final words.

Met History

Falstaff came to the Met two years after its world premiere, with Victor Maurel reprising his performance of the title role and Emma Eames as Alice. It was repeated the following year and then retired until Arturo Toscanini conducted a new production in 1909 that starred Antonio Scotti and Emmy Destinn. Tullio Serafin conducted the premiere of a new production by Joseph Urban in 1925. This performance starred Scotti, opposite Lucrezia Bori as Alice and Beniamino Gigli as Fenton. The breakout performance of the night, however, was American baritone Lawrence Tibbett's Ford. The opera returned to the repertoire in 1964 in a production directed and designed by Franco Zeffirelli and conducted by Leonard Bernstein, both in their Met debuts. The cast included Anselmo Colzani in the title role, opposite Gabriella Tucci, Judith Raskin, Regina Resnik, Rosalind Elias, Luigi Alva, and Mario Sereni. This staging remained in the Met repertory until 2005, with such illustrious artists as Renata Tebaldi, Mirella Freni, Pilar Lorengar, Patricia Racette, Marilyn Horne, Stephanie Blythe, Susan Graham, Matthew Polenzani, Tito Gobbi, Cornell MacNeil, Giuseppe Taddei, Paul Plishka, and Bryn Terfel all making appearances. In 2013, Ambrogio Maestri took on the title role in the premiere of Robert Carsen's production, which also featured Angela Meade, Lisette Oropesa, Jennifer Johnson Cano, Blythe, Paolo Fanale, and Franco Vassallo, conducted by James Levine.

Program Note

“**T**he great dream has come true,” wrote Arrigo Boito, the librettist of Verdi’s *Otello* and *Falstaff*, shortly before the former opera was unveiled in 1887. *Otello*’s premiere was an internationally celebrated success, bringing to fruition a proposal that had started eight years earlier when it was tentatively broached over the course of a dinner conversation. Boito refers to Verdi’s dream of creating a new opera based on his beloved Shakespeare, but he might just as well have marveled at the feat of luring the aging composer out of his self-proclaimed retirement from the opera stage.

Verdi had become so identified with the tragic genre that *Otello* must have seemed the perfect culmination of his life’s work. Yet Boito was determined, as he put it in a letter to a friend, “to make that bronze colossus resound one more time.” Verdi, for his part, had long harbored a desire to prove that the scope of his art extended beyond the dramas of gloomy passion with which he had built his reputation.

As early as 1847, Rossini made a pronouncement that still caused Verdi to bristle decades later: “He will never write a semi-serious opera ... much less a comic opera like *L’Elisir d’Amore*.” Undoubtedly, this reminded Verdi of the humiliating fiasco of his only previous attempt at comedy—*Un Giorno di Regno*, his second opera—but he must have also been spurred by an itch to compete with his illustrious predecessor, whose *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* Verdi deemed “the best comic opera ever written,” a work filled with a “wealth of real musical ideas, comic verve, and truth of declamation.”

Shakespeare himself, Verdi’s abiding idol, commanded admiration for the all-encompassing spectrum of a body of work that not only probes the deepest tragedy but also teems with comic vitality. Pioneering Romantics like Victor Hugo—another major influence on Verdi—even reappraised the Bard as one of their own on the grounds of his virtuosity at juggling the sublime and the grotesque within the same play. Verdi had already ventured into similar territory with the decadent festivities surrounding the grim plots of *Rigoletto* and *Un Ballo in Maschera*, for example, or in his almost Dickensian characterization of Fra Melitone in *La Forza del Destino*. Immediately prior to settling down to work on *Otello*, the composer defensively announced to his publisher Giulio Ricordi that he had been on the lookout for a comic opera libretto “for 20 years.” There’s even evidence that, just before *Aida*, he briefly considered a libretto titled *Tartufo*—drawn from Molière’s satire of religious hypocrisy.

In other words, Verdi was more or less primed to “resound” once again when, in the summer of 1889, with *Otello* a triumphant fait accompli, Boito won him over with the tempting new prospect of a libretto adapted primarily from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The composer responded with a rush of enthusiasm: “We’ll write this *Falstaff* then! We won’t think for the moment of obstacles, of age, of illness!” As it happened, the creation of his final opera was

interrupted by those very hindrances over the next several years, but it finally premiered in Milan in 1893.

Given the composer's status, *Falstaff* was essentially guaranteed to be received with reverence. Still, the fact that a comic opera could contain so much that was challenging for both its performers and its audiences must have come as a surprise. Not only is the score remarkably mercurial, but the pace of the opera itself remains unrelentingly rapid, a study in coiled energy. What in earlier works might have taken an entire scene to express here incandesces within a compressed time frame, only to jostle against a fresh onrush of musical images.

Verdi, who approached 80 by the time that he completed the score, took enormous pleasure in the countless discussions in which Boito engaged him as they hammered out the libretto's details. As a counterpart to his unbridled excitement about the project that he nicknamed "Big Belly," the composer fell prey to fits of melancholy and fretted that he would not live to complete the score.

These polar aspects—the adventure of experimenting, wedded to a wistful sense of a vanishing tradition—are evident within the sound world that Verdi constructed for *Falstaff*. No other opera by this composer tumbles into action with more headlong momentum—not even *Otello*, whose storm claps raise the curtain with a sudden shock but are accompanied by the vestigial convention of an opening chorus. *Falstaff* dispenses entirely with any hint of a prelude or choral scene setting. Instead, he launches the opera in a metrically tripping scherzo mode that almost immediately gives voice to the rapid patter of dialogue—a strategy from which Puccini, for one, would learn much.

At the same time, *Falstaff* parades a host of fleeting backward glances over the traditional tropes of Italian opera—structures and idioms that Verdi had inherited and developed across his entire oeuvre. Instead of being unfolded at leisure, these dart unpredictably in and out of the hyperactive, continually metamorphosing soundscape that Verdi composed for the array of six scenes economically laid out by Boito's scheme. Think of the brief pockets of lyricism introduced by the young pair of lovers, Nannetta and Fenton, which Boito suggested would be more effective when "sprinkled" throughout the opera, "like powdered sugar on a cake," in contrast to a standard drawn-out duet. Or take the rhetoric of the revenge aria in which Ford momentarily channels a hint of the jealous Moor. The climactic comic frenzy of the second act's finale resembles a mashup of the most dazzling moment of Rossinian "organized chaos" with a sturdily constructed Mozartean ensemble.

For their source material, Verdi and Boito turned to what is among the thinnest, most lightweight of Shakespeare's comedies. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Sir John—much as he fears giving up "my kingdom" (his ample girth) in the opera's opening scene—is but a shadow of the imposing life force who emerges in the *Henry* chronicle plays. The Falstaff of *Merry Wives* is reduced to

the butt of situation-comedy plotting by the denizens of what the critic Graham Bradshaw describes as “the respectably prosaic world of middle-class Windsor.”

Yet, this uncharacteristically slim, straightforward comedy—according to apocryphal legend, hastily put together to satisfy Queen Elizabeth’s request to see a play showing “Sir John in love”—provided the practical framework needed to bring the most complex and richly layered of Shakespeare’s comic characters to life on the lyric stage. The genius of what Boito and Verdi achieved together was to forge an opera that is, as Bradshaw puts it, “paradoxically more truly Shakespearean than its Shakespearean source.”

This extends beyond Boito’s clever interpolation of material from the *Henry* plays into Sir John’s monologues. As a “translation” of Shakespeare to the dimensions of the operatic medium, *Falstaff* brims over in text and music alike with the equivalent of Shakespearean abundance. Verdi and his librettist had enormous fun trading word play back and forth as they parsed the subtleties of Boito’s libretto—an exuberant concoction of puns, varied metrical verse forms, interrelated images, and archaic vocabulary alluding to Italy’s literary heritage (including such writers as Boccaccio).

Verdi’s music meanwhile distills and juxtaposes the divergent perspectives that comprise the opera: the idealistic young lovers, the farcical plot set in motion by Alice (Verdi describes her role as “stirring the porridge”), the dramatic conflict introduced by her husband, Ford, who conspires with Dr. Caius, and the self-serving natural force embodied by Falstaff himself, omnipresent throughout the opera—even when Sir John is off stage.

In the third act, in which the comic momentum of the first two yields to a more ritualistic atmosphere for the final scene, Verdi counters the graphic “realism” of his prismatic orchestration with something new: a miraculous evocation of the numinous world that surrounds that society and Falstaff alike. His music for the fearful specters that are summoned to Herne’s Oak and then comically revealed pays tribute to the sources of early Romanticism and its penchant for midsummer magic. But as in the finale of Mozart’s *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the long night’s comedy of errors serves as the prelude to a reconciliation: The fat knight’s “lesson” prepares the way for the young generation to be recognized and securely united in love. Verdi then gathers all the riotous energy of what has preceded and reconfigures it as a fugue, that emblem of strictly organized discipline—his greatest joke of all.

—Thomas May

Thomas May is a writer, critic, educator, and translator. His books include Decoding Wagner and The John Adams Reader, and he blogs at memeteria.com

ALSO ON STAGE



KEN HOWARD/MET OPERA

GIACOMO PUCCINI

TOSCA

Sopranos Liudmyla Monastyrskaya and Angela Gheorghiu trade off as opera's ultimate diva, starring alongside tenor Matthew Polenzani as Cavaradossi and baritone Željko Lučić as Scarpia. Domingo Hindoyan takes the podium to lead David McVicar's charged staging.

MAR 30 **APR** 2 mat, 5, 8 mat, 12, 15

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The Cast



Daniele Rustioni

CONDUCTOR (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON *Falstaff* at the Met; a concert with the Met Orchestra at Carnegie Hall; *Tannhäuser*, Rossini's *Moïse et Pharaon*, Verdi's *Requiem*, and concerts in Lyon; *La Fanciulla del West*, *Nabucco*, and *Aida* at the Bavarian State Opera; Massenet's *Hérodiade* in concert in Lyon and at Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées; *Don Carlo* at Staatsoper Berlin; and concerts with the Ulster Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Rigoletto*, and *Aida* (debut, 2017).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has served as principal conductor of the Opéra National de Lyon since 2017 and principal guest conductor of the Bavarian State Opera since 2021. This season, he becomes music director of the Ulster Orchestra, following three years as that ensemble's chief conductor. He is also conductor emeritus of the Orchestra della Toscana, where he served as music director between 2014 and 2020. He has conducted all of the major Italian symphony orchestras, as well as many throughout Europe, and has also led performances at the Salzburg Festival, La Scala, Dutch National Opera, Paris Opera, Pesaro's Rossini Opera Festival, and in St. Petersburg, Aix-en-Provence, Valencia, Venice, Madrid, Stuttgart, Zurich, Tokyo, Rome, and Naples, among others.



Jennifer Johnson Cano

MEZZO-SOPRANO (ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI)

THIS SEASON Meg Page in *Falstaff* at the Met, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the New York Philharmonic and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Verdi's *Requiem* with the San Diego Symphony, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* at Atlanta Opera, Bruckner's *Te Deum* with the New Jersey Symphony, Mahler's *Symphony No. 2* with the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra and Seattle Symphony, and recitals with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

MET APPEARANCES Since her 2009 debut as a Bridesmaid in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, she has sung nearly 150 performances of 13 roles, including Meg Page, Emilia in *Otello*, Nicklausse / the Muse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Wellgunde in the *Ring* cycle, and Waltraute in *Die Walküre*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Celeste in the world premiere of Gregory Spears's *Castor and Patience* at Cincinnati Opera, Emilia in concert with the Cleveland Orchestra, Virginia Woolf in the world premiere of Kevin Puts's *The Hours* in concert with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and Mother Marie in *Dialogues des Carmélites* at Houston Grand Opera. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Marie-Nicole Lemieux

CONTRALTO (DOLBEAU-MISTASSINI, CANADA)

THIS SEASON Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff* at Met, Azucena in *Il Trovatore* in Montreal, Mahler's Symphony No. 2 with the Cleveland Orchestra, Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Bavarian State Opera, Alcina in Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso* in concert at Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, and concerts with Les Violons du Roy, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Les Épopées, and the Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine.

MET APPEARANCES Geneviève in *Pelléas et Mélisande* (debut, 2019) and Mistress Quickly.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the title role of *Carmen* in Toulouse, Zenobia in Handel's *Radamisto* in concert at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and in Montpellier, Dalila in *Samson et Dalila* in Orange, and Charlotte in *Werther* in Montpellier. She has also sung Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* and Storgé in Handel's *Jephtha* at the Paris Opera; Azucena in Madrid; Ottone/Giunone in *Agrippina* and Bertarido in concert with Il Pomo d'Oro; Mistress Quickly at Covent Garden and the Vienna State Opera; Dalila, Suzuki, and Carmen in concert at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées; Ulrica in Wiesbaden and Zurich; the title role of Rossini's *Tancredi* in concert in Brussels; and Cassandre in *Les Troyens* in concert in Strasbourg.



Hera Hyesang Park

SOPRANO (SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA)

THIS SEASON Nannetta in *Falstaff* at the Met, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at Staatsoper Berlin, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* in Buenos Aires, and recitals at Mexico City's Palacio de Bellas Artes and Carnegie Hall.

MET APPEARANCES Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Amore in *Orfeo ed Euridice*, the Dew Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel*, Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and a Wood Sprite in *Rusalka* (debut, 2017).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Despina in *Così fan tutte* at the Glyndebourne Festival, Violetta in the world premiere of Marina Abramović's *7 Deaths of Maria Callas* at the Bavarian State Opera and at the Paris Opera, and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* at the Canadian Opera Company. She has also sung Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Lylo in Abraham's *Dschinah, das Mädchen aus dem Tanzhaus*, and Musetta in *La Bohème* at the Komische Oper Berlin; Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Najade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Glyndebourne Festival; Giannetta in *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Macau; and Despina at the Bavarian State Opera. She is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Ailyn Pérez

SOPRANO (CHICAGO, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON Alice Ford in *Falstaff* and Blanche de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Met; Mimi in *La Bohème* at Covent Garden, Staatsoper Berlin, and the Paris Opera; a concert with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra; Elisabetta di Valois in *Don Carlo* in Naples; Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire; and the title role of *Rusalka* at the Santa Fe Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Mimi and Musetta in *La Bohème*, Alice Ford, Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette*, the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the title role of *Thaïs*, and Micaëla in *Carmen* (debut, 2015).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the Countess at the Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival and in Hamburg, the title role of *Manon* at the Paris Opera, Mimi at the Bavarian State Opera, the title role of *Tosca* in Bari and at San Francisco Opera, and Alice Ford in Florence. She has also appeared at the Vienna State Opera, La Scala, Dutch National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, 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.



Christopher Maltman

BARITONE (CLEETHORPES, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON Ford in *Falstaff* at the Met, Leporello in *Don Giovanni* at Covent Garden, Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore* at Washington National Opera, Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Zemlinsky's *Eine Florentinische Tragödie* with the Munich Radio Orchestra, Amfortas in *Parsifal* in Geneva, Wotan in *Die Walküre* in Naples, the title role of *Rigoletto* at Staatsoper Berlin, and the Captain in John Adams's *The Death of Klinghoffer* in concert with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES Mark Rutland in Nico Muhly's *Marnie*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Papageno in *The Magic Flute* and *Die Zauberflöte*, Lescaut in *Manon Lescaut*, Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, Silvio in *Pagliacci*, and Harlekin in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (debut, 2005).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Iago in *Otello* at Covent Garden and in concert with the Cleveland Orchestra; the title role of *Don Giovanni* at La Scala, Covent Garden, and in Madrid; Rigoletto and Don Giovanni in Barcelona; Jochanaan in *Salome* in Frankfurt; the title role of Enescu's *Œdipe* at the Paris Opera; Orest in *Elektra* at the Salzburg Festival; and Count di Luna in Rome.



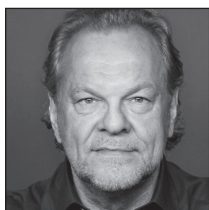
Bogdan Volkov

TENOR (TOREZ, UKRAINE)

THIS SEASON Fenton in *Falstaff* at the Met, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at Staatsoper Berlin and the Vienna State Opera, Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites* in Rome, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin* at the Bavarian State Opera and in Brussels, Tsarevich Gvidon in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* in Strasbourg, Britten's *Les Illuminations* with the Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra, and Mozart's Requiem and Fenton at the Salzburg Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Tybalt in *Roméo et Juliette* (debut, 2018).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Between 2016 and 2018, he was a member of the ensemble at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, where his roles have included Prince Lev Nikolayevich Myshkin in Weinberg's *The Idiot*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Tsar Berendey in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Snow Maiden*, Lenski, and the Holy Fool in *Boris Godunov*, among many others. He has also sung Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at Staatsoper Berlin and in concert at the Verbier Festival, Ferrando at Covent Garden, Nemorino at the Bavarian State Opera and in Turin, Alfredo in *La Traviata* at Dutch National Opera, Lenski at the Vienna State Opera and Norwegian National Opera, Fenton at Staatsoper Berlin, and Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* at LA Opera.



Michael Volle

BARITONE (FREUDENSTADT, GERMANY)

THIS SEASON The title role of *Falstaff* at the Met, Jochanaan in *Salome* at La Scala, Wotan in *Siegfried* in concert with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in Florence, and concerts at the Hungarian State Opera, Austria's Taggenbrunner Festspiele, La Scala, and Staatsoper Berlin.

MET APPEARANCES Hans Sachs, Wotan in the *Ring* cycle, Scarpia in *Tosca*, the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer*, and Mandryka in *Arabella* (debut, 2014).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Barak in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the Bavarian State Opera; Jack Rance in *La Fanciulla del West*, Herr Fluth in Nicolai's *Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor*, the title role of *Don Giovanni*, and Falstaff at Staatsoper Berlin; Wotan in *Das Rheingold* in concert with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra; Guy de Montfort in *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin; Wotan in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried* in Leipzig; and Scarpia in Dortmund and at Covent Garden. He has also appeared at the Bayreuth Festival, Salzburg Festival, Vienna State Opera, Paris Opera, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Bregenz Festival, and in Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Baden-Baden, Zurich, Tokyo, Luxembourg, Rome, Geneva, and Barcelona, among many others.