

ACCESS OPERA

2026–27 SEASON

The Met
ropolitan
Opera

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JONATHAN TICHLER / MET OPERA



GIUSEPPE VERDI

MACBETH

NEW PRODUCTION

STORY

Adapted from Shakespeare's famous tragedy, *Macbeth* traces the downfall of a scheming couple determined to seize power at any cost. Combining blood-soaked violence, political intrigue, and the supernatural, Verdi's thrilling take on the Shakespearean tale is widely considered one of the pinnacles of the operatic canon.

PRODUCTION

This new staging by Louisa Proske—a brilliant young director making waves in the opera world—explores the contrast between the sumptuous style of the Elizabethan period and the ravaged, broken-down landscape of war. Themes of fertility, lineage, and legacy recur throughout the production, haunted by witches and demons who witness the violent chaos unfold.

MUSIC

Macbeth features one of Verdi's most chilling scores. The composer went out of his way to avoid making the score too pretty, insisting that the drama was not served by lyricism. Lady Macbeth has the most commanding of the great solos, and the opera features standout choruses sung by the Witches and the Scottish refugees.

RECOMMENDED FOR
MS+

LANGUAGE
Italian

MUSICAL PERIOD
19th Century



GIACOMO PUCCINI

LA BOHÈME

STORY

Loosely based on Henry Murger's *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème* and inspired by events in Puccini's own life, the story follows a group of artistic-minded youths at odds with mainstream society after the upheavals of revolution and war.

PRODUCTION

Since 1981, Franco Zeffirelli's picturesque production has reigned at the Met, with more than 500 performances to date. In the spectacular setting of Act II, attendees will experience an astonishing 250 performers on stage at once.

MUSIC

Many of the score's memorable melodies are built incrementally, carrying the listener with them on their lyrical path. The two great love arias in Act I draw the audience in with their mostly conversational style, while Musetta's famous Act II waltz grows from an intimate reflection by one character into a full-blown ensemble sung by crowds of Parisian revelers.

RECOMMENDED FOR
All Ages

LANGUAGE
Italian

MUSICAL PERIOD
Late 19th Century



MISSY MAZZOLI / LIBRETTO BY ROYCE VAVREK

LINCOLN IN THE BARDO

WORLD PREMIERE

STORY

George Saunders's Booker Prize-winning novel arrives at the Met in operatic form. The supernatural story takes place in the "bardo," a transitional plane between the end of this life and the beginning of the next, populated by those who resist all the powers of light and darkness and refuse to accept their fates. The action revolves around 11-year-old Willie, the recently deceased son of Abraham Lincoln, whose grief-stricken visits to his son's tomb prevent Willie's spirit from moving on.

PRODUCTION

In her second production for the Met, acclaimed director Lileana Blain-Cruz illuminates the kaleidoscopic world of the bardo through neon lighting, geometric portals, puppetry, and various special effects and illusions.

MUSIC

Hailed as a "once-in-a-generation magician of the orchestra," American composer Missy Mazzoli weaves a tapestry of ethereal strings, rambunctious brass, and a host of unusual sounds—from the kazoo to extended string techniques—in conveying the drama of Saunders's narrative. The score also explores the extremes of the human voice, including the highest note ever sung on the Met stage.

RECOMMENDED FOR
HS+

LANGUAGE
English

MUSICAL PERIOD
21st Century

CONTENT ADVISORY
Sexual innuendo, suicide



LUIGI CHERUBINI

MEDEA

STORY

Scorned by her lover, abandoned in a foreign country, and seething with resentment, Medea—the mythical sorceress most famously depicted in the tragedy by Euripides—murders her own children as a form of coldblooded revenge. Yet behind the filicidal rage lies one of the most complex and fascinating characters ever conceived for the stage.

PRODUCTION

David McVicar's production, which unfurls in the crumbling ruins of once-gilded Corinth, draws on both digital technologies (such as video projection) and analog stagecraft (including a giant mirror suspended over the back wall of the stage) to offer a layered take on the murderous mother at its center.

MUSIC

The score of *Medea* shows Cherubini's abilities in vocal, choral, and instrumental writing. It is the lead role, of course, that reigns supreme—from her confrontation aria with Giasone in Act I and their duet at the end of that act to her poignant moment of pity for her children in Act III and her final scene of unalloyed fury.

RECOMMENDED FOR
MS+

LANGUAGE
Italian

MUSICAL PERIOD
Early 19th Century

CONTENT ADVISORY
Infanticide



RECOMMENDED FOR
MS+

LANGUAGE
Italian

MUSICAL PERIOD
Late 19th Century

CONTENT ADVISORY
Sexual assault, suicide

GIACOMO PUCCINI

TOSCA

STORY

Adapted from French playwright Victorien Sardou's drama *La Tosca*, Puccini's thriller about an opera diva, a dissident painter, and a corrupt police chief is set against the backdrop of violent revolution. In 1800, Rome is ruled with an iron fist, and Napoleon's armies rattle their sabers to the north. In the midst of it all, one woman is forced to choose among political allegiance, personal ambition, and love.

PRODUCTION

David McVicar's production brings the opulence and splendor of the Eternal City to the Met stage. In startling detail, the set reproduces three real-life monuments that appear in the opera: the Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle, the Palazzo Farnese, and the Castel Sant'Angelo.

MUSIC

The score of *Tosca* is considered a prime example of the style of verismo, an elusive term usually translated as "realism." The typical musical features of this tradition are prominent in *Tosca*: short arias with an uninhibited flood of raw melody, ambient sounds that blur the distinctions between life and art, and the use of parlato—words spoken instead of sung—at moments of tension.



RECOMMENDED FOR
MS+

LANGUAGE
French

MUSICAL PERIOD
19th Century

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS

SAMSON ET DALILA

STORY

A masterpiece of French grand opera, *Samson et Dalila* is Saint-Saëns's take on the biblical hero of legendary strength and the seductress whose beauty overpowers him. Set in 1150 B.C.E., the mighty Samson fights vigilantly to free the ancient Israelites from their bondage under the Philistines.

PRODUCTION

Darko Tresnjak's production, first seen on Opening Night of the Met's 2018–19 season, uses abstract geometric shapes to bridge the ancient Middle East and the modern world. Through extravagant choreography, massive sculptural set pieces, and vibrant colors, this staging evokes the exotic, the crass, the sensual, and even the sublimely spiritual.

MUSIC

The opera's score—calling for a huge orchestra and a chorus of nearly 100 singers—showcases Saint-Saëns's genius. Portions of the opera, including Dalila's seduction aria "Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix" and the extraordinary ballet sequence in the final scene (the Bacchanale), are known well beyond the opera house.



GAETANO DONIZETTI

MARIA STUARDA

STORY

Based on Friedrich Schiller's play, *Maria Stuarda* chronicles the personal and political rivalry between Mary, Queen of Scots, and Queen Elizabeth I of England. The action takes place in the late 16th century at Elizabeth's court in London and at Fotheringhay Castle in central England, Mary's final place of confinement before her execution.

PRODUCTION

David McVicar's highly stylized scenery oscillates between the opulence of Elizabeth's court and the bleakness of a prison cell. Emphasizing bold swatches of red, white, and black, the costumes are bathed in historical detail.

MUSIC

For all the beauty of its orchestral writing, *Maria Stuarda* is a prime example of the mid-19th-century bel canto style—the drama is firmly embedded in the vocal parts. A notable curiosity of the score is the wide range of casting possibilities for the two leading ladies: Either role can be (and has been) sung by a soprano or a mezzo-soprano.

RECOMMENDED FOR
MS+

LANGUAGE
Italian

MUSICAL PERIOD
19th Century



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

THE MAGIC FLUTE

HOLIDAY PRESENTATION

STORY

Mozart's sublime Enlightenment fable moves freely between earthly comedy and noble mysticism, appealing to audiences from all walks of life. Masonic imagery—alluding to the fraternal order of which both composer and librettist were members—provides a throughline to this universal tale of a young hero's quest to rescue his beloved from the forces of evil.

PRODUCTION

Julie Taymor's visually stunning adaptation of this classic opera utilizes vibrant costume design and puppetry to transport the audience to a mythical landscape beyond time and space.

MUSIC

This opera is an example of the German singspiel style, in which sung texts are interspersed with spoken dialogue. Mozart's final opera, *The Magic Flute* ranges from solemn to comic to triumphant and contains some of the highest and lowest written notes sung in the operatic repertoire.

RECOMMENDED FOR
Grades 3–6 Only

LANGUAGE
English

MUSICAL PERIOD
18th Century

CONTENT ADVISORY

Suggested hanging, suggested intimacy



RECOMMENDED FOR
MS+

LANGUAGE
Italian

MUSICAL PERIOD
19th Century

GIUSEPPE VERDI

OTELLO

STORY

Adapted from Shakespeare's tragedy, Verdi's *Otello* is a gripping meditation on the downfall of a volatile hero who is deceived into murdering the woman he loves—and the collateral damage that results when our worst impulses triumph over our better selves.

PRODUCTION

Directed by Bartlett Sher, this staging of *Otello* updates the setting to the period of the opera's creation—the 19th century, around the time of the Risorgimento, when Italy's many independent states unified as a modern nation. Moveable, interlinking glass panels evoke a sense of grandeur while also creating enclosed, intimate spaces for Shakespeare's drama to unfold.

MUSIC

The score of *Otello* is remarkable for its overall intensity and dramatic insight, as well as its memorable solo numbers. Throughout the score, the orchestra plays a diverse role unprecedented in Italian opera, depicting a great range of color—from the power of nature in the storm scene in Act I to a tender night of love to the opera's chilling final scene.



RECOMMENDED FOR
All Ages

LANGUAGE
English, French,
German

MUSICAL PERIOD
21st Century

CONTENT ADVISORY
Gunshot effects

KEVIN PUTS / LIBRETTO BY MARK CAMPBELL

SILENT NIGHT

MET PREMIERE

STORY

Inspired by the true events of the 1914 Christmas truce, when soldiers spontaneously set aside the horrors of the First World War and crossed the trenches to mingle, exchange gifts, and sing carols with the enemy, *Silent Night*—based on the 2005 French film *Joyeux Noël*—is a poignant depiction of shared humanity in the most inhumane circumstances.

PRODUCTION

This Met premiere staging by James Robinson takes the audience directly to the battlefields of the Western Front. Sets designed by Mimi Lien feature raised platforms, stark lighting, and an array of earth tones to depict life in the trenches and the battle waging above them.

MUSIC

Kevin Puts's Pulitzer Prize-winning opera, in which each character sings in his or her native language, weaves together eclectic musical strands to create a cohesive, cinematic whole: from the Renaissance canon "Dona nobis pacem" to solitary bagpipes, traditional German Christmas music, and percussive battle sequences.



RECOMMENDED FOR
All Ages

LANGUAGE
Italian

MUSICAL PERIOD
19th Century

CONTENT ADVISORY
Suicide

GIUSEPPE VERDI

AIDA

STORY

An intimate story told on an epic scale, *Aida* sees the eponymous Ethiopian princess torn between love and country when her rival Amneris is promised to her secret lover, the Egyptian soldier Radamès. What ensues is opera's greatest love triangle caught in the crossfire of two warring nations.

PRODUCTION

Through innovative use of projections, animations, and nonspeaking actors representing Egyptologists exploring ancient tombs, this spectacular staging by Tony Award-winning director Michael Mayer explores how the historical past comes to life.

MUSIC

The score of *Aida* is a sophisticated example of Italian Romanticism, imbued with a convincingly exotic hue. Making no claims to authenticity, Verdi created a unique and soaring musical palette for this opera, which had its premiere at the Khedivial Opera House in Cairo, Egypt. The grandeur of the subject is aptly conveyed with huge patriotic choruses, most notably the unforgettable Triumphal March scene in Act II.



RECOMMENDED FOR
MS+

LANGUAGE
French

MUSICAL PERIOD
19th Century

JULES MASSENET

MANON

STORY

Based on the scandalous 1731 novel *L'Histoire du Chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut* by the Abbé Prévost, Massenet's opera follows the title character as she morphs from wide-eyed country girl to queen of Parisian high society and ultimately tragic victim of her own impulsive desires.

PRODUCTION

The Met's production by French director Laurent Pelly updates the opera's setting from the 18th century to the period in which Massenet composed it, the Belle Époque, and highlights the historical convergence of social repression and artistic liberty.

MUSIC

Massenet's score captures the drama of his most memorable heroine with deft craftsmanship, expressive vocal and orchestral writing, and an almost unparalleled level of sensuality. The combination of gripping storyline and sumptuous score makes *Manon* an irresistible vehicle for a soprano with the gifts and temperament to handle it.



RECOMMENDED FOR
MS+

LANGUAGE
German

MUSICAL PERIOD
Early 20th Century

RICHARD STRAUSS

DER ROSENKAVALIER

STORY

This grand Viennese comedy traces the love triangle of the aging aristocrat the Marschallin, her lover Octavian, and Sophie, the beautiful younger woman who steals his heart. What results is not high drama or bloody conflict, but instead the resigned imperative to accept the laws of time—even if it means giving up what you love most.

PRODUCTION

The opera is originally set in Vienna in the 1740s. Genuine historical references are merged with fictitious inventions (like the “noble custom” of the presentation of the silver rose to a fiancée, which never actually existed) and anachronisms (like the Viennese Waltz, which did not yet exist at that time). The Met’s current production by Robert Carsen moves the setting to the last years of the Habsburg Empire, just before the outbreak of World War I.

MUSIC

For *Der Rosenkavalier*, Strauss made use of a characteristically gigantic orchestra, and the score is lush, rich, and romantic to an extraordinary degree. The three main characters, including the title role of young Octavian, are all sung by women, and the final trio is considered one of the most beautiful ensembles ever written for the operatic stage.