



ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

**THE ROYAL OPERA
2008/9 SEASON**

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THE ROYAL OPERA

2008/9 SEASON

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THE ROYAL OPERA SEASON 2008/9 AT A GLANCE

Antonio Pappano conducts six productions in his seventh Season as Music Director as well as concert performances of Britten's *War Requiem* and Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*.

<i>Don Giovanni</i>	<i>Messa da Requiem</i>
<i>La fanciulla del West</i>	<i>Lulu</i>
<i>War Requiem</i>	<i>La traviata</i>
<i>Les Contes d'Hoffmann</i>	<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>

In addition Antonio Pappano will accompany Rolando Villazón in a concert recital at the Royal Opera House on 24 June 2009.

Repertoire new to The Royal Opera

<i>La Calisto</i>
<i>Matilde di Shabran</i>
<i>Die tote Stadt</i>
<i>Dido and Aeneas</i>
<i>Acis and Galatea</i>
<i>The Beggar's Opera</i> (arranged by Benjamin Britten)

New Productions

<i>Hänsel und Gretel</i>	directed by Moshe Leiser / Patrice Caurier
<i>Der fliegende Holländer</i>	directed by Tim Albery
<i>Acis and Galatea</i>	directed by Wayne MacGregor
<i>Lulu</i>	directed by Christof Loy

Productions new to the Royal Opera House

<i>La Calisto</i>	directed by David Alden (opened 2005 in Munich)
<i>Matilde di Shabran</i>	directed by Mario Martone (opened 2004 in Pesaro)
<i>Die tote Stadt</i>	directed by Willy Decker (opened 2004 in Salzburg)
<i>Dido and Aeneas</i>	directed by Wayne McGregor (opened 2006 in Milan)

Co-productions with The Royal Opera

<i>Lulu</i>	co-production with Teatro Real, Madrid
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First Revivals at the Royal Opera House

<i>L'elisir d'amore</i>	premiered November 2007 directed by Laurent Pelly
<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	premiered December 2005 directed by Moshe Leiser / Patrice Caurier

New Production in the Linbury Studio Theatre

The Beggar's Opera

directed by **Justin Way**

Debuts with The Royal Opera include

<i>La fanciulla del West</i>	Jack Rance Sonora Larkens	Claudio Sgura Daniel Sutin Andrew Foster Williams
<i>La Calisto</i>	Diana/Destinio/First Fury Giove Linfea Satirino/Nature/Second Fury	Monica Bacelli Umberto Chiummo Guy de Mey Dominique Visse
<i>La bohème</i>	Mimi	Alexia Voulgaridou
<i>Matilde di Shabran</i>	Isidoro Ginardo Aliprando Egoldo	Alfonso Antoniozzi Carlo Lepore Marco Vinco Robert Anthony Gardiner
<i>Elektra</i>	Aegisth Fifth Maid	Frank van Aken Eri Nakamura
<i>Les Contes d'Hoffmann</i>	Olympia Luther Hermann	Ekaterina Lekhina Lynton Black Changan Lim
<i>Hänsel und Gretel</i>	Gertrude Dew Fairy	Irmgard Vilsmaier Simona Mihai
<i>Turandot</i>	Turandot Liù Ping	Jennifer Wilson Latonia Moore Giorgio Caoduro
<i>Die tote Stadt</i>	Paul Paul Gastone/Victorin	Stephen Gould Torsten Kerl Bernard Richter
<i>Rigoletto</i>	Lucienne Duke of Mantua Matteo Borsa	Jurgita Admonyte Francesco Meli Daniel Norman
<i>Der fliegende Holländer</i>	Senta Steersman	Anja Kampe John Tessier
<i>Messa da Requiem</i>		Ildar Abdrazakov
<i>Dido and Aeneas</i>	Dido Aeneas Belinda Spirit/Mercury	Sarah Connolly Lucas Meachum Lucy Crowe Iestyn Davies
<i>Acis and Galatea</i>	Galatea Damon	Danielle de Niese Paul Agnew
<i>Il trovatore</i>	Manrico Ferrando	Walter Fraccaro Mikhail Petrenko
<i>Lohengrin</i>	King Henry Herald	Kwangchul Youn Boaz Daniel
<i>Lulu</i>	Lulu Alwa	Agneta Eichenholz Klaus Florian Vogt
<i>Un ballo in maschera</i>	Amelia Oscar	Angela Marambio Anna Christy

Role debuts include

<i>Don Giovanni</i>	Donna Elvira Zerlina Masetto	Joyce DiDonato Miah Persson Robert Gleadow
<i>La fanciulla del West</i>	Minnie (stage debut) Nick Ashby Sonora Larkens	Eva-Maria Westbroek Bonaventura Bottone Eric Halfvarson Daniel Sutin Andrew Foster-Williams
<i>Matilde di Shabran</i>	Matilde Edoardo Contessa D'Arco Isidoro Raimondo	Aleksandra Kurzak Vesselina Kasarova Enkelejda Shkosa Alfonso Antoniozzi Mark Beesley
<i>Elektra</i>	Orest Young Servant	Johan Reuter Alfie Boe
<i>Les Contes d'Hoffmann</i>	Four Villains Giulietta Antonia Four Servants	Gidon Saks Christine Rice Katie Van Kooten Graham Clark
<i>Hänsel und Gretel</i>	Gretel Witch Peter	Diana Damrau Anja Silja Thomas Allen
<i>Turandot</i>	Pang	Ji-Min Park
<i>The Beggar's Opera</i>	Macheath Polly Peachum Peachum Mrs Peachum	Thomas Randle Leah-Marian Jones Jeremy White Susan Bickley
<i>Die tote Stadt</i>	Frank/Fritz Gastone/Victorin Brigitta	Gerald Finley Bernard Richter Kathleen Wilkinson
<i>Rigoletto</i>	Duke of Mantua Maddalena	Francesco Meli Sara Fulgoni
<i>Der fliegende Holländer</i>	Mary	Clare Shearer
<i>I Capuleti e i Montecchi</i>	Tebaldo	Dario Schmunck
<i>Messa da Requiem</i>		Emma Bell
<i>Acis and Galatea</i>	Acis Galatea Polyphemus	Charles Workman Danielle de Niese Matthew Rose
<i>Lohengrin</i>	Lohengrin	Simon O'Neill
<i>Lulu</i>	Countess Geschwitz Dr Schön Gymnasiast/Dresser/Groom	Jennifer Larmore Michael Volle Heather Shipp

Role debuts with The Royal Opera include

<i>Don Giovanni</i>	Don Giovanni Leporello Donna Anna Donna Elvira Don Ottavio Commendatore Masetto	Mariusz Kwiecien Lorenzo Regazzo Patrizia Ciofi Emma Bell Ramón Vargas Eric Halfvarson Alex Esposito
<i>La fanciulla del West</i>	Happy	Quentin Hayes

<i>La Calisto</i>	La Calisto Giunone/L'Eternita Mercurio Pane Endimione Silvano	Sally Matthews Véronique Gens Markus Werba Ed Lyon Lawrence Zazzo Clive Bayley
<i>La bohème</i>	Duke of Mantua Marcello Schaunard	Wookyung Kim Christopher Maltman Roderick Williams
<i>Matilde di Shabran</i>	Corradino	Juan Diego Flórez
<i>Elektra</i>	Elektra Overseer	Susan Bullock Miriam Murphy Christine Brewer
<i>War Requiem</i>		Kristine Jepson
<i>Les Contes d'Hoffmann</i>	Nicklausse	Angelika Kirchschlager
<i>Hänsel und Gretel</i>	Hänsel Hänsel Gretel Witch Peter Gertrude	Alice Coote Camilla Tilling Ann Murray Eike Wilm Schulte Elizabeth Connell
<i>Turandot</i>	Turandot Calaf Calaf Liù Timur	Irène Theorin José Cura Johan Botha Svetla Vassileva Paata Burchuladze
<i>Die tote Stadt</i>	Marie/Marietta	Nadja Michael
<i>Rigoletto</i>	Monterone	Iain Paterson
<i>Der fliegende Holländer</i>	Holländer Daland Erik	Bryn Terfel Hans-Peter Koenig Torsten Kerl
<i>I Capuleti e i Montecchi</i>	Giulietta Romeo (stage debut) Lorenzo Capellio	Anna Netrebko Elīna Garanča Giovanni Battista Parodid Eric Owens
<i>Messa da Requiem</i>		Barbara Frittoli Olga Borodina Piotr Beczala
<i>Dido and Aeneas</i>	Sorceress	Sara Fulgoni
<i>Il trovatore</i>	Manrico Leonora	Roberto Alagna Sondra Radvanovsky
<i>Lohengrin</i>	Lohengrin Elsa Telramund Ortrud	Johan Botha Anne Schwanewilms Falk Struckmann Petra Lang
<i>L'elisir d'amore</i>	Nemorino Adina Dulcamara	Giuseppe Filianoti Diana Damrau Simone Alaimo
<i>Lulu</i>	Painter/Negro Schilgolch Rodrigo/Animal Trainer Prince Marquis/Manservant	Will Hartmann Gwynne Howell Peter Rose Philip Langridge
<i>La traviata</i>	Violetta Giorgio Germont	Renée Fleming Thomas Hampson
<i>Un ballo in maschera</i>	Riccardo Renato	Ramón Vargas Carlos Alvarez

<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Ulrica Figaro Count Almaviva Count Almaviva Doctor Bartolo Don Basilio	Elena Manistina Simon Keenlyside Juan Diego Flórez Colin Lee Alessandro Corbelli Ferruccio Furlanetto
<i>Tosca</i>	Tosca Cavaradossi	Deborah Voigt Marcello Giordani

Artists returning to their roles with The Royal Opera include

<i>Don Giovanni</i>	Don Giovanni Leporello Donna Anna Don Ottavio Don Ottavio Zerlina	Simon Keenlyside Kyle Ketelsen Marina Poplavskaya Ian Bostridge Robert Murray Rebecca Evans
<i>La fanciulla del West</i>	Dick Johnson Jack Rance Jack Wallace	José Cura Silvano Carroli Gwynne Howell
<i>La bohème</i>	Musetta Colline	Anna Leese Alexander Vinogradov
<i>Elektra</i>	Chrysothemis Klytemnestra	Anne Schwanewilms Jane Henschel
<i>War Requiem</i>	English Soldier German Soldier	Ian Bostridge Thomas Hampson
<i>Les Contes d'Hoffmann</i>	Hoffmann Olympia Spalanzani	Rolando Villazón Vassiliki Karayanni Robin Leggate
<i>Turandot</i>	Timur Emperor Altoum	Willard W. White Robert Tear
<i>Rigoletto</i>	Rigoletto Rigoletto Gilda Sparafucile	Paolo Gavanelli Leo Nucci Ekaterina Siurina Kurt Rydl
<i>Il trovatore</i>	Count di Luna	Dmitri Hvorostovsky
<i>L'elisir d'amore</i>	Belcore	Anthony Michaels-Moore
<i>La traviata</i>	Alfredo Dr Grenvil	Joseph Calleja Robert Lloyd
<i>Un ballo in maschera</i>	Samuel	Giovanni Battista Parodi
<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Rosina Berta	Joyce DiDonato Jennifer Rhys-Davies
<i>Tosca</i>	Scarpia	Bryn Terfel

Conductors

Marc Albrecht, Christian Badea, Maurizio Benini, Ivor Bolton, Semyon Bychkov, Colin Davis, Mark Elder, Richard Hickox, Christopher Hogwood, Nicola Luisotti, Charles Mackerras, Ingo Metzmacher, Daniel Oren, Antonio Pappano, Carlo Rizzi, Robin Ticciati

Conducting debut at Covent Garden

Marc Albrecht, Ingo Metzmacher, Robin Ticciati

Visiting Orchestras

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
City of London Sinfonia

New Emerging Talent

Lucy Crowe	Belinda	<i>Dido and Aeneas</i>
Lucas Meachum	Aeneas	<i>Dido and Aeneas</i>

Young Artists new to the Jette Parker Programme 2008/9

Simona Mihai Soprano	Echo (<i>Hänsel und Gretel</i>) Juliette (<i>Die tote Stadt</i>) 15-year-old Girl (<i>Lulu</i>)
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Eri Nakamura Mezzo-soprano	Fifth Maid (<i>Elektra</i>) Echo (<i>Hänsel und Gretel</i>) First Witch (<i>Dido and Aeneas</i>) Giannetta (<i>L'elisir d'amore</i>)
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Chaghan Lim Baritone	Hermann (<i>Les Contes d'Hoffmann</i>) Marullo (<i>Rigoletto</i>)
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Robert Anthony Gardiner Tenor	Egoldo (<i>Matilde di Shabran</i>) Filch (<i>The Beggar's Opera</i>)
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DON GIOVANNI

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

CAST A: 8, 10, 12, 15, 18 September at 7pm

CAST B: 27, 30 September / 2 October at 7pm / 4 October at 12 noon

The Royal Opera's 2008/9 Season opens with **Francesca Zambello's** 2002 production of *Don Giovanni*, which returns to the Royal Opera House for its third revival. Designs are by **Maria Björnson** with lighting by **Paul Pyant** and choreography by **Stephen Mear**. Conducting honours are shared between **Sir Charles Mackerras** and Music Director **Antonio Pappano** who conduct two stellar casts.

British baritone **Simon Keenlyside** shares the title role with Polish baritone **Mariusz Kwiecien**. Simon Keenlyside previously sang the role at Covent Garden in 2002 when the production was new. He has also sung the role of Don Giovanni in Vienna, Zurich, Barcelona and Tokyo. He made his Royal Opera debut in 1989 as Silvio (*Pagliacci*) and his roles for the Company include the title roles in *Billy Budd* and *Hamlet*, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Valentin (*Faust*), Winston (1984), Prospero (*The Tempest*), Pelléas (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) and Oreste (*Iphigénie en Tauride*). He will sing the role of Rodrigo in a new production of *Don Carlo* for The Royal Opera in June 2008.

Mariusz Kwiecien sings Don Giovanni for the first time at Covent Garden. He has previously sung the role in Vienna, Tanglewood, Bilbao, San Francisco, Houston, Sante Fe, Seattle and Warsaw. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Marcello (*La bohème*) in 2005 and returned in 2008 to make his debut in the role of Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*). Recent roles include Enrico (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*) in Vienna and Paris and Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) at the Metropolitan Opera and in San Diego.

The role of Leporello is shared between American bass-baritone **Kyle Ketelsen** and Italian bass-baritone **Lorenzo Regazzo**. Kyle Ketelsen sang Leporello at the Royal Opera House in 2007 and has also performed the role for Los Angeles Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Kentucky Opera, Opera Pacific and Madison Opera. He will sing the role in Barcelona in July 2008. He has also sung the title role of Don Giovanni for Minnesota Opera in 2006. He made his Royal Opera debut in 2004 as Speaker of the Temple (*Die Zauberflöte*) and returned to sing Henrik (*Maskerade*), Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Zoroastro (*Orlando*) and Escamillo (*Carmen*) in March 2008. Recent roles include Lindorf (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) in Paris and Colline (*La bohème*) in Santa Fe.

Lorenzo Regazzo sings the role of Leporello for the first time at Covent Garden. He has previously sung the role in Paris, Madrid, Brussels and also at the Barbican Centre in London. He made his debut with the The Royal Opera as Publio (*La clemenza di Tito*) in 2000 and returned to sing Lorenzo (*I Capuleti e i Montecchi*), Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*) and Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*). Recent roles include Selim (*Il turco in Italia*) in Munich and Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*) in Bilbao.

The role of Donna Anna is shared between former Jette Parker Young Artist Russian soprano **Marina Poplavskaya** and Italian soprano **Patrizia Ciofi**. Marina Poplavskaya sang her first Donna Anna for Covent Garden in this production in July 2007. She has also sung the role in Avignon and Valencia. She made her Royal Opera debut in 2006 as Third Norn (*Götterdämmerung*) and also sang the title role in *La Juive* in concert performances at the Barbican. She returned to the Royal Opera House during the 2007/8 Season to sing Tatyana

(*Eugene Onegin*) and Elisabetta di Valois in a new production of *Don Carlo*. She will sing the role of Desdemona (*Otello*) at the Salzburg Festival in August 2008.

Patrizia Ciofi sings the role of Donna Anna for the first time with The Royal Opera. She has previously sung the role in Paris and in a concert performance at the Barbican Centre, London in 2006. She made her debut at Covent Garden as Gilda (*Rigoletto*) in 2002 and reprised the role in 2007. Recent roles include the title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at La Scala, Milan and Barcelona, Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in Genoa, Leila (*Les Pêcheurs de perles*) in Avignon and the title role in *Maria Stuarda* in Liège.

American mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato** and British soprano **Emma Bell** share the role of Donna Elvira. Joyce DiDonato makes her role debut as Donna Elvira for The Royal Opera. She made her Royal Opera House debut in 2003 in the role of Fox (*The Cunning Little Vixen*) and returned to sing Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) in 2006. Recent roles include Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in San Francisco, the title role in *La Cenerentola* in Barcelona, the title role in *Ariodante* in Geneva and Idamante (*Idomeneo*) in Paris.

British soprano **Emma Bell** sings Donna Elvira for the first time at Covent Garden. She has previously sung the role with Garsington Opera in 2002. She made her Royal Opera House debut as Leonora (*Maskarade*) in 2005. Her recent roles include the title role in *Alcina* in Paris, Miss Jessel (*The Turn of the Screw*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera and both Vitellia (*La clemenza di Tito*) and Violetta (*La traviata*) for ENO.

The role of Don Ottavio is shared between Mexican tenor **Ramón Vargas** and British tenors **Ian Bostridge** and **Robert Murray**. Ramón Vargas has previously sung the role of Don Ottavio in Mexico. He made his debut at Covent Garden in 1996 as Alfredo (*La traviata*) and has subsequently returned to the Royal Opera House to sing Duke of Mantua (*Rigoletto*) and Rodolfo (*La bohème*). Recent roles include Roméo (*Roméo et Juliette*) in Vienna and Riccardo (*Un ballo in maschera*) in Munich. He will sing the title role in *La clemenza di Tito* at the Metropolitan Opera, New York in May 2008.

Ian Bostridge previously sang the role of Don Ottavio in this production of *Don Giovanni* in 2003. He made his Covent Garden debut as Third Jew (*Salome*) in 1995 and his roles for The Royal Opera have included Peter Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*), Vasek (*The Bartered Bride*) and Caliban (*The Tempest*). He also sang the role of the English Soldier in Britten's *War Requiem* at the Barbican Hall in 1999 and returns later in the 2008/9 Season to sing the *War Requiem* with The Royal Opera at the Royal Albert Hall. Recent operatic roles include Aschenbach (*Death in Venice*) at ENO and he sings the title role in *Idomeneo* in Amsterdam in May 2008.

Former Young Arist Robert Murray will sing Don Ottavio for one performance on 18 September. He previously sang the role for The Royal Opera in 2007. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 2005 as Gastone (*La traviata*) and his other roles include Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Borsa (*Rigoletto*), Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Pong (*Turandot*), and Jacquino (*Fidelio*). He returns later in the Season to sing the role of Harry (*La fanciulla del West*).

Swedish soprano **Miah Persson** and Welsh soprano **Rebecca Evans** share the role of Zerlina. This will be Miah Persson's role debut as Zerlina. She made her Royal Opera House debut as Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in 2006. Her recent roles include Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*) in Stockholm, Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Frankfurt Opera, Sifare (*Mitridate, re di Pontò*) in Salzburg and Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in San Francisco.

Rebecca Evans returns to the role she created in the original production in 2002. She has also sung the role at the Metropolitan Opera, New York and in Amsterdam. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 1997 in a concert performance of *The Pilgrim's Progress* at the Barbican Hall and her roles for the company include Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Nannetta (*Falstaff*), Johanna (*Sweeney Todd*), Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Despina (*Così fan tutte*). Recent roles include Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*) and Poppea (*Agrippina*) at ENO, Ginevra (*Ariodante*) in Munich and her role debut as Mimi (*La bohème*) for Welsh National Opera.

American bass **Eric Halfvarson** returns to Covent Garden to sing the role of Commendatore for the first time with The Royal Opera. He will also sing Ashby (*La fanciulla del West*) during the 2008/9 Season. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Claggart in *Billy Budd* in 2000 and his other roles for the Company include Moser (*I masnadieri*), Doctor (*Wozzeck*), Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Hunding (*Die Walküre*), Prince Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*), Alvisé Badoero (*La Gioconda*) in concert and most recently Rocco (*Fidelio*). He returns to Covent Garden at the end of the 2007/8 Season to sing the role of Grand Inquisitor in a new production of *Don Carlo*. Recent roles include Lodovico (*Otello*) and King Marke (*Tristan und Isolde*) for Los Angeles Opera.

The role of Masetto is shared between former Jette Parker Young Artist Canadian bass **Robert Gleadow** and Italian bass **Alex Esposito**.

Robert Gleadow made his Royal Opera debut singing the role of Dom Henrique (*Dom Sébastien*) in concert performances in 2005 and his roles for The Royal Opera have included Samuel (*Un ballo in maschera*), Fiorello (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Marquis d'Obigny (*La traviata*), Doctor (*Macbeth*), Zaretsky (*Eugene Onegin*), Wagner (*Faust*), Colline (*La bohème*), Sciarrone (*Tosca*) and Physician (*Pelléas et Mélisande*). Recent roles include Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Toronto and Colline (*La bohème*) in Santiago and Dallas. These performances mark his debut in the role of Masetto.

Alex Esposito made his debut at the Royal Opera House in January 2008 singing the role of Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*). He has previously sung the role of Masetto at La Scala, Milan and in Firenze and will also sing the role at the Salzburg Festival in August 2008. Recent roles include Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Nice, Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) in Parma, Fernando (*La gazza ladra*) in Pesaro and Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) in Turin.

INSIGHT EVENING

Thursday 18 September, 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Tickets £14 (£6 students and ROH Access Scheme)

Clore Studio Upstairs

LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

Giacomo Puccini

16, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29 September at 7pm

Piero Faggioni returns to direct this eighth revival of his production of Puccini's *La fanciulla del West*, first seen at Covent Garden in 1977. Costume and lighting designs are also by Piero Faggioni, who was Principal Guest Producer with The Royal Opera from 1988 to 1990. He also directed *Il trovatore* for the Company in 1989.

Set designs are by **Kenneth Adam**, well-known for his designs for James Bond films such as *Dr No* and *Goldfinger*. His other film credits include *The Ipcress File*, *Barry Lyndon*, *Sleuth* and *The Freshman*.

Antonio Pappano, now in his seventh Season as Music Director of The Royal Opera, conducts the first two opening productions of the 2008/9 Season, *Don Giovanni* and *La fanciulla del West*. He conducts six productions this Season of works ranging from Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* to Berg's *Lulu*, as well as concert performance of Britten's *War Requiem* and Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*.

Dutch soprano **Eva-Maria Westbroek** sings Minnie, a role she has previously sung in concert in Amsterdam in 2006. She made her debut at the Royal Opera House as Katerina Ismailova in Richard Jones' production of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in 2006 and returned to sing Sieglinde (*Die Walküre*) in Keith Warner's *Ring* cycle in October 2007. Recent roles include Elisabeth (*Tannhäuser*) and Empress (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*) in Paris and the title role of *Jenůfa* in Stuttgart.

Argentinian tenor **José Cura** returns to the role of Dick Johnson which he sang in this production in 2005. He has also sung the role in Zürich in 2004. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1995 in the title role of *Stiffelio* and his roles with the Company have included the title roles in *Otello*, *Andrea Chénier* (in concert), Samson (*Samson et Dalila*), Cavaradossi (*Tosca*), Ipanov (*Fedora*) and Manrico (*Il trovatore*).

Italian baritone **Silvano Carroli** returns to Covent Garden to sing the role of the sheriff Jack Rance, which he created in the original production in 1977 and sang again in 1978 and 1982. His roles with The Royal Opera have included Scarpia (*Tosca*), Iago (*Otello*) and Nélusko (*L'Africaine*). Recent roles include Amonasro (*Aida*), Baron Scarpia (*Tosca*) and Zaccaria (*Nabucco*) at Verona.

He shares the role with Italian baritone **Claudio Sgura** who makes his debut at Covent Garden singing the role of Jack Rance for the first time on 22 and 26 September. He made his debut at La Scala, Milan in 2007 as Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) and recent roles have included Le Bret (*Cyrano de Bergerac*) also for La Scala, Milan and Count de Luna (*Il trovatore*) in Savona.

British-born tenor **Bonaventura Bottone** sings the role of Nick for the first time. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1987 as the Italian Singer (*Der Rosenkavalier*) and his subsequent roles for the Company include Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*), Raoul (*Les Huguenots*), Count Libenskof (*Il viaggio a Reims*), the Italian Tenor (*Capriccio*), Pirelli (*Sweeney Todd*) and most recently Torquemada (*L'Heure espagnole*).

Having sung Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*) at the opening of the 2008/9 Season, American bass **Eric Halfvarson** returns to Covent Garden to make his role debut as Ashby. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Claggart in *Billy Budd* in 2000 and his other roles for the Company include Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Hunding (*Die Walküre*), Prince Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*) and Rocco (*Fidelio*).

Welsh bass **Gwynne Howell** returns to the role of Jack Wallace which he created in the original production in 1977 and which he also sang in 1978 and 1982. He made his Covent Garden debut in 1970 and his more recent roles for The Royal Opera include Gonzalo in the world premiere of *The Tempest*, Old Convict (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*), Simone (*Gianni Schicchi*) and Titirel (*Parsifal*).

Making both his debut at the Royal Opera House and his role debut as Sonora is American baritone **Daniel Sutin**. Recent roles have included Paris (*Roméo et Juliette*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, One-Eyed Brother (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*) in Chicago and Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*) for San Antonio Opera.

Jette Parker Young Artist Lithuanian bass-baritone **Kostas Smoriginas** sings the role of Bello. He made his stage debut with The Royal Opera in January 2008 in the role of Marquis d'Obigny (*La traviata*) and his other roles during his first Season as a Young Artist include Angelotti (*Tosca*) and Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*). His roles during the 2008/9 Season include Schlemil (*Les Contes D'Hoffmann*), Mandarin (*Turandot*), Third Noble (*Lohengrin*) and Journalist (*Lulu*) as well as reprising Angelotti (*Tosca*) and Marquis D'Obigny (*La traviata*).

British baritone **Quentin Hayes** sings the role of Happy. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 2000 as Agravaïn (*Gawain*) and his roles for the Company include Hermann (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Schaunard (*La bohème*), Larry Landua (*Sophie's Choice*), Ned Keene (*Peter Grimes*), Ping (*Turandot*), Second Apprentice (*Wozzeck*) and Prince Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*).

The role of Joe is sung by **Harry Nicoll** who also sang the role in 2005. His recent roles at Covent Garden include Major Domo (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Don Curzio (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and Le Remendado (*Carmen*).

Also making his Royal Opera debut is British bass-baritone **Andrew Foster-Williams** who sings the role of Larkens for the first time. His recent roles include Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*) for Welsh National Opera and Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) for Opera North.

Australian tenor **Hubert Francis** returns to the role of Trin which he sang in 2005. A former member of the Young Artists Programme at the Royal Opera House, he made his debut with The Royal Opera in 2003 as Peasant in *Luisa Miller*. His other roles with the Company have included Brühlmann (*Werther*), Spoletta (*Tosca*), Male Chorus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) and Third Jew (*Salome*).

Former Young Artist British tenor **Robert Murray** returns to sing the role of Harry. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 2005 as Gastone (*La traviata*) and his other roles include Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Borsa (*Rigoletto*), Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Pong (*Turandot*), Jacquino (*Fidelio*) and Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*).

British baritone **Adrian Clarke** returns to sing Sid, the role in which he made his Royal Opera House debut in 1994 and reprised in 2005. Recent roles for The Royal Opera include Le Dancaïre (*Carmen*), Kostandis (*The Greek Passion*), Mityukha (*Boris Godunov*).

Company Principal **Jeremy White** returns to the role of José Castro which he sang in the 2005 production. His many roles with The Royal Opera include Truffaldino (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Sacristan (*Tosca*), Kecal (*The Bartered Bride*) and Benoit (*La bohème*).

British bass **Graeme Danby** returns to the role of Billy Jackrabbit which he sang in this production in 2005. His recent roles for The Royal Opera include Marquis D'Obigny (*La traviata*) as well as Charrington in the world premiere of *1984*.

Scottish mezzo-soprano **Clare Shearer** sings the role of Wowkle. Her roles with The Royal Opera have included Grimgerde and Siegrune (*Die Walküre*). She returns later in the Season to sing Mary (*Der fliegende Holländer*).

Piero Faggioni's production of *La fanciulla del West* was first seen at the Royal Opera House in 1977 with Carol Neblett as Minnie, Plácido Domingo as Dick Johnson, Silvano Carroli as Jack Rance and conducted by Zubin Mehta. The production was refurbished in 2004 when Piero Faggioni returned to direct Andrea Gruber as Minnie, José Cura as Dick Johnson, Mark Delavan as Jack Rance and conducted by Antonio Pappano.

PRE-PERFORMANCE TALK

Wednesday 24 September, 6pm - 6.30pm

Clore Studio Upstairs

LA CALISTO

Francesco Cavalli

23, 25 September, 1, 3, 10 October at 7.30pm / 27 September at 12 noon

PRODUCTION NEW TO THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Production from the Bayerische Staatsoper

Cavalli's *La Calisto* is heard for the first time at the Royal Opera House in a production which was originally seen at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich in May 2005. The production, directed by **David Alden** with sets by **Paul Steinberg**, costumes by **Buki Shiff** and lighting by **Pat Collins**, was subsequently revived in Munich in 2006 and 2007.

American director David Alden works at Covent Garden for the first time. He has enjoyed a long association with English National Opera where he has directed *Jenůfa*, *Ariodante* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* and also with the Bayerische Staatsoper where his productions have included *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, *Lulu* and *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*.

Having conducted the premiere in Munich, **Ivor Bolton**, Chief Conductor of the Mozart Orchester in Salzburg, returns to Covent Garden to conduct the **Soloists of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Continuo Ensemble** for these performances. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House in 1995 conducting the world premiere of Alexander Goehr's *Arianna*. He has also conducted *Giulio Cesare*, *Don Giovanni* and most recently *Iphigénie en Tauride* for The Royal Opera.

The majority of the cast have been involved in this production previously, either returning to the roles they created in the original production or to roles created in subsequent revivals.

British soprano **Sally Matthews** returns to Covent Garden to sing the title role, having sung the role in the original production and in both the revivals in Munich. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 2001 as Nannetta (*Falstaff*) and was a member of the Young Artists Programme from 2001 to 2003 during which time her roles included Flowermaidens (*Parsifal*), Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Iris (*Semele*) and Wood Nymph (*Rusalka*). Other roles with The Royal Opera include Sophie (*Werther*) and Sifare (*Mitridate, re di Ponto*) and she will sing the role of Anne Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*) for the first time in July 2008. Recent roles include Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) in Amsterdam and the title role in *Alice in Wonderland* in Munich in 2007.

Returning to The Royal Opera is Italian mezzo-soprano **Monica Bacelli** who sings the roles of Diana/Destinio/First Fury which she sang at the Bayerische Staatsoper in this production in 2005. She previously sang the role of Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for The Royal Opera

in 1994. Her recent roles include Sesto (*Giulio Cesare in Egitto*) and Cecilio (*Lucio Silla*) for the Salzburg Festival and La Fenice, Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) for La Scala, Milan and the title role in *Tamerlano* in Madrid in March 2008.

French soprano **Véronique Gens** returns to the role of Giunone/L'Eternità which she sang at the premiere in Munich. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Venus/Soprano in *King Arthur* in 1995. Recent roles include Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) in Barcelona and Madrid, Arminda (*La finta giardiniera*) at the Salzburg Festival, Phébé (*Castor et Pollux*) in Amsterdam, Hanna Glawari (*Die Lustige Witwe*) in Lyon and Vitellia (*La clemenza di Tito*) in Barcelona.

Returning to the role of Mercurio is Austrian baritone **Markus Werba**, who sang the role in the 2007 revival in Munich. He will make his debut at Covent Garden in May 2008 as Harlequin (*Ariadne auf Naxos*). Recent roles include Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) at the Salzburg Festival and Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Lyon.

Another debut at the Royal Opera House is Italian bass-baritone **Umberto Chiummo** who sings the role of Giove which he created in the original production. Recent roles include Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*) at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Garibaldo (*Rodelinda*) and Ariodante (*Serse*) in Munich, Mustafa (*L'italiana in Algeri*) in Ferrara and Orbazzano (*Tancredi*) in Madrid.

Belgian tenor **Guy de Mey** also makes his debut at the Royal Opera House, returning to the role of Linfea which he sang at the premiere of this production in Munich. Recent roles include Dormouse and other roles in the world premiere of *Alice in Wonderland* at the Bavarian State Opera, Monsieur Triquet (*Eugene Onegin*) and Dancing Master (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in Milan and Zurich.

British tenor **Ed Lyon** sings the role of Pane which he also sang for one performance in Munich in 2006. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) in the Linbury Studio Theatre in January 2008. A former member of the National Opera Studio, his recent roles include Tamino (*The Magic Flute*) for Opera North and Telemaco (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*) for Welsh National Opera.

Also making his debut with The Royal Opera is French countertenor **Dominique Visse** who reprises the roles of Satirino/Nature/Second Fury which he sang in Munich. His recent roles include Nireno (*Giulio Cesare*) at La Monnaie in Brussels and Amsterdam, L'humana fragilità (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*) in Munich and he will sing the role of Nutrice in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera in the summer of 2008.

American counter-tenor **Lawrence Zazzo** returns to the role of Endimione which he sang in the original production. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Trinculo (*The Tempest*) in 2004. Recent appearances includes the title role in *Giulio Cesare* at La Monnaie, Tolomeo (*Giulio Cesare*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Goffredo (*Rinaldo*) in Berlin, Arsamene (*Serse*) at English National Opera and Refugee in Jonathan Dove's *Flight* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

Also returning to the role he created in the original production in Munich is British bass **Clive Bayley** who sings Silvano. He made his debut at Covent Garden in *Fidelio* in 1987 and his roles for The Royal Opera include Agravain (*Gawain*), Colline (*La bohème*), Foltz (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), José Castro (*La fanciulla del West*), Carbon (*Cyrano de Bergerac*) and most recently Thoas (*Iphigenie en Tauride*). His recent roles include Antinous/Time/Neptune (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*) for Welsh National Opera, Titirel (*Parsifal*) in Munich and Fasolt (*Das Rheingold*) in Strasburg.

La Calisto was premiered in 1651 at the Teatro San Apollinaire, Venice.

INSIGHT EVENING

Tuesday 16 September, 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Tickets £14 (£6 students and ROH Access Scheme)

Clore Studio Upstairs

LA BOHÈME

Giacomo Puccini

11, 14, 16, 18 October at 7.30pm

John Copley returns to direct the 22nd revival of his popular production of *La bohème*, first staged at Covent Garden in 1974. Designs are by **Julia Trevelyan Oman** with lighting by **John Charlton** after **William Bundy**.

In 2008, John Copley celebrates his 60th anniversary of working for The Royal Opera. He first appeared for The Royal Opera in 1948 as an extra in *Aida*, and other early appearances included Apprentice (*Peter Grimes*) and Prince of Persia (*Turandot*). His first production for The Royal Opera was *Suor Angelica* in 1965.

Romanian-born **Christian Badea** returns to conduct all performances. He made his debut with The Royal Opera conducting *La bohème* in 1996 and returned in 2001 to conduct *Turandot* and *Tosca* in 2004.

Greek soprano **Alexia Voulgaridou** makes her debut with The Royal Opera singing the role of Mimì. She has previously sung the role of Mimì in Berlin, Hamburg, La Scala, Milan and the Bregenz Festival. Recent roles include Blanche (*Les Dialogues des Carmélites*) and Desdemona (*Otello*) in Hamburg, Liù (*Turandot*) and Micaëla (*Carmen*) in Valencia and the title role in *Anna Bolena* in Palermo.

South Korean tenor **Wookyung Kim** sings the role of Rodolfo for the first time at Covent Garden. He has previously sung the role in Dresden and Hamburg. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House as the Duke of Mantua (*Rigoletto*) in 2007. Since 2003 he has been a member of the Semperoper in Dresden where his roles have included Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Ishmael (*Nabucco*) and Macduff (*Macbeth*). Recent roles include Alfredo (*La traviata*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York and in Berlin, Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*) in Munich and The Italian Singer (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in Hamburg.

Singing the role of Marcello for the first time with The Royal Opera is British baritone **Christopher Maltman**. He has previously sung the role in Munich in 2006. He made his Royal Opera debut in the 1997 *Farewell Gala* and his subsequent roles have included Sebastian (*The Tempest*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Doctor Malatesta (*Don Pasquale*), Nardo (*La finta giardiniera*), Ramiro (*L'Heure espagnole*) and most recently Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*). Recent roles include the title role in *Billy Budd* in Munich, Count (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Vienna and Albert (*Werther*) in Munich.

New Zealand soprano **Anna Leese** sings the role of Musetta which she first sang for The Royal Opera in 2006. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Tamiri (*Il re pastore*) in the Linbury Studio Theatre in 2006 and her other roles for the Company include Micaëla (*Carmen*) and First Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*). She will also sing the role of Echo (*Ariadne auf*

Naxos) later in the 2007/8 Season. Recent roles in the UK include Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) and Female Chorus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) for the Benjamin Britten International Opera School.

Russian bass **Alexander Vinogradov** returns to sing the role of Colline in which he made his Royal Opera House debut in 2006. He has previously sung the role for the Deutsche Staatsoper and also for L'Opéra National de Paris. His recent roles include Nightwatchman (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) in Berlin and Escamillo (*Carmen*) in Tokyo.

British baritone **Roderick Williams** sings the role of Schaunard, a role he has sung previously for Scottish Opera. He made his debut with The Royal Opera singing the roles of Obstinate, Watchful and First Shepherd in *The Pilgrim's Progress* at the Barbican and at Birmingham Symphony Hall in 1997. His roles for Opera North have included the title role in *Don Giovanni*, The Count (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) and Ned Keene (*Peter Grimes*). Recent roles include Papageno (*The Magic Flute*) for English National Opera and Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*) at the Edinburgh Festival.

Company Principal bass **Jeremy White** returns to sing the role of Benoit which he sang previously for the Company in 2005 and 2006. His many roles for The Royal Opera include Truffaldino (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Badger (*The Cunning Little Vixen*), Marquis d'Obigny (*La traviata*), Kecal (*The Bartered Bride*), Parsons (1984), Bonze (*Madama Butterfly*), Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Benoit (*La bohème*), Surin (*The Queen of Spades*), Betto di Signa (*Gianni Schicchi*), Kuligin (*Kát'a Kabanová*) and Snug (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

British baritone **Adrian Clarke** sings the role of Alcindoro. He made his debut in 1994 as Sid in *La fanciulla del West*, a role he repeated in 2005 and earlier in the 2008/9 Season. His more recent roles for The Royal Opera include Librarian (*Sophie's Choice*), Kostandis (*The Greek Passion*), Mityukha (*Boris Godunov*) and Le Dancaïre (*Carmen*).

PRE-PERFORMANCE TALK

Thursday 16 October, 6.30pm - 7pm

Clore Studio Upstairs

MATILDE DI SHABRAN

Gioachino Rossini

23, 27, 31 October, 3, 6, 11 November at 6.30pm

PRODUCTION NEW TO THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Generously supported by Peter Moores Foundation

Mario Martone directs his production of *Matilde di Shabran* which was first seen at the Rossini Festival in Pesaro in 2004. Mario Martone previously directed *Un ballo in maschera* for The Royal Opera in 2005 which returns later in the Season.

Set designs are by **Sergio Tramonti**, costumes by **Ursula Patzak** and lighting by **Pasquale Mari**. This is the first performance of *Matilde di Shabran* at Covent Garden since 1854.

Carlo Rizzi, Music Director of Welsh National Opera, returns to Covent Garden to conduct all performances of *Matilde di Shabran*. He has previously conducted *La traviata*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Così fan tutte*, *Otello*, *Aroldo* and *Il trovatore* for The Royal Opera.

Making her debut in the title role is Polish soprano **Aleksandra Kurzak**. She made her debut at Covent Garden in 2005 as Aspasia (*Mitridate, re di Ponto*) and returned to sing Norina (*Don Pasquale*), Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in July 2008. Recent roles include Adele (*Die Fledermaus*) and Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) in Munich, Fiorilla (*Il turco in Italia*) and Marie (*La Fille du régiment*) in Hamburg and Ännchen (*Der Freischütz*) at the Salzburg Festival.

Peruvian tenor **Juan Diego Flórez** sings the role of Corradino, the role in which he made his operatic debut at the Rossini Festival in Pesaro in 1996. He also sang the role in this later production in Pesaro in 2004, which was recorded by Decca. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1997 as Potoski in a concert performance of Donizetti's *Elisabetta* at the Royal Festival Hall. Subsequent roles for The Royal Opera include Elvino (*La sonnambula*), Rodrigo (Rossini's *Otello*), Don Ramiro (*La Cenerentola*), Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*) and Tonio (*La Fille du régiment*).

Singing the role of Edoardo for the first time is Bulgarian mezzo-soprano **Vesselina Kasarova**. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) in 1993 and her roles with the Company have included the title role in *La Cenerentola*, Sesto (*La clemenza di Tito*) and Zayda (*Dom Sébastien*) in concert in 2005. Recent roles include Charlotte (*Werther*) in Munich and Ruggiero (*Alcina*) in Paris. She will sing the title role in *Carmen* for the first time in June 2008 in Zurich.

Albanian soprano **Enkelejda Shkosa** makes her role debut as Contessa D'Arco. She made her debut at Covent Garden in 1997 as Maddalena (*Rigoletto*) and her roles for The Royal Opera have included Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*) and Pauline (*The Queen of Spades*). Recent roles have included Nérís (*Medée*) at the Hellenic Festival in Athens, Isabella (*L'italiana in Algeri*) at the Palm Beach Opera and Elisabetta (*Maria Stuarda*) for Rome Opera.

Making his debut at Covent Garden is Italian baritone **Alfonso Antoniozzi** who sings the role of Isidoro for the first time. Recent roles include Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*) at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, the title role in *Don Pasquale* in Genova, the title role in *Falstaff* in Turin and Don Magnifico (*La Cenerentola*) in Barcelona.

Also making his debut with The Royal Opera is Italian bass **Carlo Lepore** who sings the role of Ginardo, which he sang in this production at the 2004 Rossini Festival in Pesaro. Recent roles include Selim (*Il turco in Italia*) in Rome, Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Calandrino (*Socrate immaginario*) at La Scala, Milan.

Also new to Covent Garden is Italian bass-baritone **Marco Vinco** who makes his Royal Opera debut in the role of Aliprando which he sang in Pesaro in 2004. Recent roles include the title role in *Don Giovanni* for Monte Carlo Opera, Selim (*Il turco in Italia*) in Toulouse and Pesaro and Monsieur Le Blonde (*Il ritorno di Don Calandrino*) at the Salzburg Festival.

British bass **Mark Beesley** sings the role of Raimondo for the first time. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1989 and recent roles for the Company include Count Ceprano (*Rigoletto*), Doctor Grenvil (*La traviata*) and Theseus (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Jette Parker Young Artist British tenor **Robert Anthony Gardiner** makes his Royal Opera debut singing the role of Egoldo. In the 2008/9 Season, he will also sing Filch (*The Beggar's*

Opera). Recent roles include Monk (*Curlew River*) for Opera Frankfurt and Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) for the Ryedale Festival.

INSIGHT EVENING

Tuesday 14 October, 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Tickets £14 (£6 students and ROH Access Scheme)

Clore Studio Upstairs

ELEKTRA

Richard Strauss

8, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24 November at 7.30pm

This production of *Elektra*, first seen at Covent Garden in 2003, is revived for the first time. Direction, set designs and lighting are by **Charles Edwards**, with costume designs by **Brigitte Reiffenstuel** and movement by **Leah Hausman**.

This revival is conducted by **Mark Elder**, Music Director of the Hallé Orchestra. Recent operas he has conducted for The Royal Opera include *Cyano de Bergerac*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Turandot*, *La bohème*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Stiffelio*, *Dom Sébastien* in concert and he will conduct *Ariadne auf Naxos* in June 2008.

British soprano **Susan Bullock** sings the title role. She has previously sung Elektra at La Scala, Milan and La Monnaie, Brussels as well as in Stuttgart, Dresden, Toronto and Frankfurt. She made her debut at the Royal Opera House in 2006 as Marie (*Wozzeck*) and returned to Covent Garden to sing the role of Brünnhilde (*Die Walküre*) in 2007. Recent roles include the title role in *Tosca* in Frankfurt, Brünnhilde (*Siegfried*) in Lyon as well as at the New National Theatre, Tokyo with the Canadian Opera Company, at Teatro Nacional de Sao Carlos in Lisbon and at La Fenice.

Returning to the role of Chrysothemis which she created in the original production is German soprano **Anne Schwanewilms**. She has previously sung the role at La Scala, Milan as well as in Berlin and Hamburg. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 2004 in the title role in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Recent roles include Madam Lidoine (*Les Dialogues des Carmélites*) in Hamburg, Elsa (*Lohengrin*) in Amsterdam and Paris, and Elisabeth (*Tannhäuser*) in Berlin.

American mezzo-soprano **Jane Henschel** sings the role of Klytemnestra. She has previously sung the role for The Royal Opera in 1997 in the Götz Friedrich production. She has also sung Klytemnestra for the Bayerische Oper in Munich, San Francisco Opera, in Berlin and Vienna. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 1992 as Nurse (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*) and her other roles for the Company have included Fricka, Waltraute, Erda (*The Ring*), Mrs Grose (*The Turn of the Screw*), Ulrica (*Un ballo in maschera*) and Gaea (*Daphne*) in concert. Recent roles include Baba the Turk (*The Rake's Progress*) and La Mère (*Louise*) in Paris.

Danish baritone **Johan Reuter** will make his role debut as Orest. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 2006 in the title role of *Wozzeck*. He has been a member of the Royal Danish Opera since 1996 where his roles have included Wotan (*Das Rheingold*), Interrogator/Uncle Albert in the world premiere of *Kafka's Trial* by

Poul Ruders and the title role in *Simon Boccanegra*. Recent roles include the title role of Don Giovanni in Copenhagen, Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Vienna and Macbeth in Lisbon. He sings the role of Theseus in the world premiere of *The Minotaur* at Covent Garden in April 2008.

Making his debut at the Royal Opera House is Dutch tenor **Frank van Aken** who sings the role of Aegisth, a role he has also sung in Frankfurt and Stuttgart. Recent roles for Frankfurt Opera include Hermann (*The Queen of Spades*), the title role in *Tannhäuser* and Laca (*Jenůfa*).

British mezzo-soprano **Frances McCafferty** sings the role of First Maid, the role in which she made her Royal Opera House debut in 1997. Her recent appearances with The Royal Opera include the Governess (*The Queen of Spades*), Yetta Zimmerman (*Sophie's Choice*), Xenia's Nurse (*Boris Godunov*) and Duenna (*Cyrano de Bergerac*).

Estonian mezzo-soprano **Monika-Evelin Liiv**, now on her second year of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, sings the role of Second Maid. She made her Royal Opera debut as Flora (*La traviata*) in 2008 and also sang Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) in the same Season. Her roles during the 2008/9 Season include Ines (*Il trovatore*), Lady Artist (*Lulu*) and Flora (*La traviata*).

Singing the role of Third Maid is British mezzo-soprano **Kathleen Wilkinson**. She makes her debut with The Royal Opera in the role of Mother Goose (*The Rake's Progress*) in July 2008. Her recent roles include Mrs Herring (*Albert Herring*) for Glyndebourne Touring Opera and Filipyevna (*Eugene Onegin*) for Welsh National Opera.

British soprano **Elizabeth Woollett** sings the role of Fourth Maid for the first time. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 1991 as Clorinda in *La Cenerentola* and her roles for the Company include Ines (*Il trovatore*), Lady-in-Waiting (*Macbeth*) and Mrs Coyle (*Owen Wingrave*).

New to the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme is Japanese soprano **Eri Nakamura** who makes her debut with The Royal Opera as Fifth Maid. Her roles for the New National Theatre in Tokyo have included Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Marzelline (*Fidelio*) and Nanetta (*Falstaff*). Her roles during the 2008/9 Season include Sandman (*Hänsel und Gretel*) and First Witch (*Dido and Aeneas*) and Giannetta (*L'elisir d'amore*).

The role of the Overseer is sung by Irish soprano **Miriam Murphy**, a role she has previously sung at the Edinburgh International Festival. She made her debut at the Royal Opera House singing the role of Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth*) in March 2006 and returned to sing the role of Female Convict (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*) later the same Season. She will sing her first Turandot in May 2008 for Bilbao Opera.

Former Young Artist **Alfie Boe** returns to Covent Garden to sing the role of Young Servant for the first time. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Shepherd in *Tristan und Isolde* in 2002. Recent roles include Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) in Strasbourg, Caliph (*Kismet*) for English National Opera and he returns to ENO to sing Camille de Rosillon (*The Merry Widow*) in April 2008.

Jette Parker Young Artist South African bass **Vuyani Mlinde** sings the role of Orestes's Tutor. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Second Man in Armour (*Die Zauberflöte*) in 2008 and his roles during his first year on the Programme include A Cappadocian (*Salome*), Zaretsky (*Eugene Onegin*) and Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*).

Company Principal bass **Jeremy White** sings the role of Old Servant. His many roles for The Royal Opera include Truffaldino (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Betto di

Signa (*Gianni Schicchi*), Kuligin (*Kát'a Kabanová*) and Snug (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). His roles during the 2008/9 Season include José Castro (*La fanciulla del West*), Benoit (*La bohème*) and Peachum (*The Beggar's Opera*).

WAR REQUIEM

Benjamin Britten

Sunday 9 November at 7.30pm – ROYAL ALBERT HALL

With kind support of the Royal Albert Hall

To mark the 90th anniversary of Armistice Day, The Royal Opera will present a concert performance of Britten's *War Requiem* at the Royal Albert Hall. With text taken from the Requiem Mass and poems by Wilfred Owen, this great commemorative war elegy was first performed in Coventry Cathedral on 30 May 1962 to great critical and popular acclaim.

Music Director **Antonio Pappano**, now in his seventh Season with The Royal Opera, will conduct this concert performance which will be repeated in Birmingham on 21 March 2009. Antonio Pappano marked his opening concert as Music Director with the Santa Cecilia Orchestra with a performance of Britten's *War Requiem* in 2005. He has also conducted the work in Los Angeles.

In addition to conducting the *War Requiem*, Antonio Pappano will conduct six productions during the course of the 2008/9 Season: *Don Giovanni*, *La fanciulla del West*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, a new production of *Lulu*, *La traviata* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. He will also conduct Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* at the Royal Opera House in March 2009.

The part of the English soldier, originally written for Peter Pears, will be sung by British tenor **Ian Bostridge** who last sang the role for The Royal Opera in 1999. This is his second role of the Season, having sung Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) in September 2008. He made his Royal Opera debut in 1995 as Third Jew (*Salome*) and his subsequent roles for the Company include Peter Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*), Vasek (*The Bartered Bride*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) and Caliban (*The Tempest*). This is his second role of the Season, having sung Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) in September 2008. Recent concert performances include Schubert's *Schwanengesang* with Antonio Pappano in Glasgow and *St John Passion* in London and Boston.

American baritone **Thomas Hampson** returns to the role of the German soldier which he also sang for The Royal Opera in 1999. His association with the Royal Opera House began in 1993 when he made his debut as Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), returning for Marcello (*La bohème*), Rodrigo (*Don Carlos*), Amfortas (*Parsifal*), Mandryka (*Arabella*), Renato (*Un ballo in maschera*) and most recently the title role in *Macbeth*. He returns later in the Season to sing the role of Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*).

American soprano **Christine Brewer** takes on the role originally intended for the Russian soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, but which was first performed by Irish soprano Heather Harper. Christine Brewer has sung the work all over the world and also with Antonio Pappano in Rome. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 1994 as Countess Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and returned to sing in the Opening Gala at the Royal Opera House in 1999. Recent roles include Isolde (*Tristan und Isolde*) for San Francisco Opera and her role debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Dyer's Wife (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), repeating the role for Paris Opera.

Tiffin Boys' Choir will perform with The Royal Opera for this performance of Britten's *War Requiem*.

The Royal Opera last performed Britten's *War Requiem* at the Barbican Hall, London and at Le Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris in October 1999, conducted by the then Music Director Bernard Haitink. The cast included Ian Bostridge, Thomas Hampson and Russian soprano Marina Mescheriakova.

There will be a further performance of Britten's *War Requiem* on 21 March 2009 at Birmingham Symphony Hall

LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN

Jacques Offenbach

**25, 28 November, 1, 4, 10 December at 6.30pm / 7 December at 3pm /
13 December at 6pm**

John Schlesinger's 1980 production of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* is directed in this revival by **Dan Dooner**. Set designs are by **William Dudley**, costume designs by **Maria Björnson** and lighting design by **David Hersey**. Choreography is by **Eleanor Fazan** and the fight director **William Hobbs**.

Music Director **Antonio Pappano**, now in his seventh Season with The Royal Opera, conducts all performances of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. He conducts six productions during the course of the 2008/9 Season: *Don Giovanni*, *La fanciulla del West*, a new production of *Lulu*, *La traviata* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and as well as concert performances of Britten's *War Requiem* and Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*.

Mexican tenor **Rolando Villazón** returns to sing Hoffmann, the role in which he made his Royal Opera House debut in 2004. He has also sung the role in Paris in 2007. Subsequent performances with The Royal Opera include Rodolfo (*La bohème*), the Duke of Mantua (*Rigoletto*), Lensky (*Eugene Onegin*) and he will sing the title role in *Don Carlo* in June 2008.

Israeli-born South African bass baritone **Gidon Saks** sings the role of Four Villains for the first time. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House in 1995 as Mr Flint (*Billy Budd*) and returned to sing Soldato, Pescatore, Nunzio Primo (*Arianna*) that same year as well as roles in *The Pilgrims Progress* (Mistrust, Apollyon, Lord Hate-Good) in 1997. Recent roles include Hunding (*Die Walküre*) in Washington, Scarpia (*Tosca*) in Bregenz, Kochubei (*Mazepa*) for Welsh National Opera and Daland (*Der fliegende Holländer*) in Washington.

The Muse of Poetry and Nicklausse is sung by American mezzo-soprano **Kristine Jepson**. She made her debut at the Royal Opera House in 2004 as Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) and returns in June 2008 to sing the role of Composer (*Ariadne auf Naxos*). She has previously sung the role of Nicklausse in Paris in 2002. Recent roles include Kitty Oppenheimer (*Doctor Atomic*) in San Francisco and Amsterdam, Sister Helen Prejean in Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* in San Francisco and Vienna and Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in Dresden and Genova.

The role of Olympia is shared between Russian soprano **Ekaterina Lekhina** and Greek soprano **Vassiliki Karayanni**.

Ekaterina Lekhina makes her debut at the Royal Opera House. She has previously sung the role of Olympia in Tel Aviv and Klosterneuburg in Austria. Recent roles also include Queen of the Night (*Die Zauberflöte*) in Munich, for Deutsche Oper, Berlin and at the Staatsoper Berlin. She was first Prize winner of Operalia 2007 in Paris.

Vassiliki Karayanni made her debut at the Royal Opera House in the role of Olympia in 2004. Her roles with the National Opera of Greece have included Queen of the Night (*Die Zauberflöte*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*) and Blondchen (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*) and she has also sung Zerbinetta (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in Lisbon and Gilda (*Rigoletto*) for Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf.

British mezzo-soprano **Christine Rice** sings Giulietta. She made her Royal Opera debut in 1998 as Flora (*La traviata*) at the Royal Albert Hall and her roles for the Company have included Sonyetka (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*), the title role in *The Rape of Lucretia*, Dryad (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Judith (*Duke Bluebeard's Castle*), Siébel (*Faust*) and Concepcion (*L'Heure espagnole*). She also created the role of Miranda in the world premiere of Thomas Adès's *The Tempest* for The Royal Opera and will create the role of Ariadne in the world premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's *The Minotaur* in April 2008. Recent roles include Nerone (*Agrippina*) for English National Opera and Penelope (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*) in Frankfurt.

Former Young Artist American soprano **Katie Van Kooten** sings the role of Antonia for the first time. She made her Royal Opera debut as Magda (*La rondine*) in 2004 and her subsequent roles for the Company include Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Kate Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Arbate (*Mitridate, re di Ponto*), Leonora (*Maskarade*), Aminta (*Il re pastore*), Marguerite (*Faust*), Mimì (*La bohème*) and Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). Recent roles also include Micaëla (*Carmen*) for English National Opera.

British tenor **Graham Clark** sings the role of Four Servants. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Mime (*Siegfried*) in 1995 and reprised the role in 1996 and 1998. His other roles for The Royal Opera have included Captain Vere (*Billy Budd*), Bishop of Budoja (*Palestrina*) and Captain (*Wozzeck*) in 2002 and 2006. Recent roles include The Witch (*Hänsel und Gretel*) in Los Angeles, Aegisth (*Elektra*) in Barcelona and he will sing the role of Lawyer (*Punch and Judy*) for English National Opera in April 2008.

The role of Crespel is sung by British bass **Matthew Rose**. A former Young Artist, he made his debut at the Royal Opera House as Jonas Fogg (*Sweeney Todd*) in 2004 and his roles have included Sciarrone (*Tosca*), Wagner (*Faust*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Schlemil (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Montano (*Otello*), Tom (*Un ballo in maschera*), Zuniga (*Carmen*), Albert (*La Juive*) in concert, Masetto (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and most recently Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). His recent roles have also included Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) in Madrid, Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Colline (*La bohème*) and The Speaker (*The Magic Flute*) for English National Opera and Figaro (*The Marriage of Figaro*) for Welsh National Opera.

Lithuanian bass-baritone **Kostas Smoriginas**, a member of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme sings the role of Schlemil. He made his stage debut at the Royal Opera House as Marquis d'Obigny (*La traviata*) in 2008 and he will also sing the role of Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season will include Bello (*La fanciulla del West*), Mandarin (*Turandot*), Journalist (*Lulu*) and Third Noble (*Lohengrin*) as well as a return to the roles of Marquis d'Obigny (*La traviata*) and Angelotti (*Tosca*).

Returning to the role of Spalanzani is British tenor **Robin Leggate**, who last sang the role for The Royal Opera in 2004. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House in 1977 and his many roles for the Company have included Mime (*Das Rheingold*), Pang (*Turandot*), Cassio

(*Otello*), Leonard (*Maskarade*), Herod (*Salome*) and Monsieur Triquet (*Eugene Onegin*). He returns to The Royal Opera later in the Season to sing Don Basilio (*Le nozze di Figaro*).

Jette Parker Young Artist Korean tenor **Ji-Min Park** sings the role of Nathanael. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Third Esquire (*Parsifal*) in 2007 and his roles for the Company have included Gastone de Letorières (*La traviata*) and Fourth Jew (*Salome*). He will sing the role of Scaramuccio (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in June 2008. Roles during the 2008/9 Season include Pang (*Turandot*), Coridon (*Acis and Galatea*) and Second Noble (*Lobengrin*)

The role of Luther is sung by British bass-baritone **Lynton Black** making his debut with The Royal Opera. Recent roles include Superintendent Budd (*Albert Herring*) for Glyndebourne on Tour and Mr Gobineau (*The Medium*) at L'Opéra de Monte-Carlo.

Making his debut at the Royal Opera House in the role of Hermann is Korean baritone **Changhan Lim**, a member of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme. His roles during the 2008/9 Season will include Marullo (*Rigoletto*), Silvano (*Un ballo in maschera*), and Fiorello (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*). Recent roles include Marcello (*La bohème*) and Alfio (*Cavalleria rusticana*) in France.

The Voice of Antonia's Mother is sung by British mezzo-soprano **Gaynor Keeble**. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Third Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) in 2008. Her roles have included Maddalena (*Rigoletto*), Berta (*The Barber of Seville*) for Welsh National Opera and Marcellina (*The Marriage of Figaro*) for English Touring Opera.

HÄNSEL UND GRETEL

Engelbert Humperdinck

CAST A: 9, 12, 16, 18, 21 December at 7.30pm / 14 December at 6pm /
29 December at 1pm

CAST B: 11 December at 7.30pm / 14 December at 2pm (family performance) /
28 December at 7pm / 30 December, 1 January at 6pm

NEW PRODUCTION

New Production generously supported by The Jean Sainsbury Royal Opera House Fund

Patrice Caurier and **Moshe Leiser** return to direct two casts in a new production of Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*. Set designs are by **Christian Fenouillat**, costumes by **Agostino Cavalca** and lighting by **Christophe Forey**. Their previous productions for The Royal Opera include *La Cenerentola*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Il turco in Italia*, *Hamlet* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

Conducting honours are shared between former Music Director of The Royal Opera **Colin Davis** and **Robin Ticciati**, Music Director of Glyndebourne on Tour. Colin Davis has most recently conducted *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *La clemenza di Tito* and *Die Zauberflöte* for The Royal Opera. These performances mark Robin Ticciati's debut with The Royal Opera. Recent performances include *Macbeth* and *Così fan tutte* for Glyndebourne on Tour and *Il sogno di Scipione* in Salzburg.

Austrian mezzo-soprano **Angelika Kirchschlager** sings the role of Hänsel for Cast A performances. She made Royal Opera House debut in 2002 in the world premiere of *Sophie's Choice* and has subsequently returned to sing Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) and Mélisande (*Pelleas et Mélisande*). She previously sang the role of Hänsel in Graz in 1999. Recent roles include Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) and Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in Vienna.

British mezzo-soprano **Alice Coote** sings the role of Hänsel in Cast B performances. She made her debut in the role at the Metropolitan Opera, New York in January 2008. She made her Royal Opera debut in 2002 as Dryad (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) and returned to sing the title role in *Orlando* in 2003. Recent roles include her role debut as Carmen and Sesto (*La clemenza di Tito*) for English National Opera and Sesto (*Giulio Cesare*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

Making her debut in the role of Gretel is German soprano **Diana Damrau** who shares the role with Swedish soprano **Camilla Tilling**. Diana Damrau made her debut at Covent Garden in 2003 as Queen of the Night (*Die Zauberflöte*) and her roles for The Royal Opera have included Zerbinetta (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) and Fiakermilli (*Arabella*). Recent roles include her first Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York and Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Salzburg and Paris.

Camilla Tilling made her debut with The Royal Opera as Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in 2000 and subsequent roles with The Royal Opera include Dorinda (*Orlando*), Oscar (*Un ballo in maschera*) and Arminda (*La finta giardiniera*). She has previously sung the role of Gretel in Geneva in 2004. Recent roles include Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) in Gothenburg.

German soprano **Anja Silja** returns to Covent Garden to sing the role of the Witch for the first time. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 1967 Leonore in *Fidelio* and her more recent roles for The Royal Opera have included Kostelnicka (*Jenufa*) and Herodias (*Salome*). Recent roles include the Countess (*The Queen of Spades*) in Vienna and Kostelnicka (*Jenufa*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

Sharing the role of the Witch is Irish mezzo-soprano **Ann Murray**. She made her debut at Covent Garden in 1976 as Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and her many roles for The Royal Opera include Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Composer (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) the title role in *Giulio Cesare* and Despina (*Così fan tutte*). She sings the role of Marzelline (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for The Royal Opera in June 2008.

The role of Gertrud is shared between **Elizabeth Connell** and German soprano **Irmgard Viltsmaier**. Elizabeth Connell has previously sung the role of Gertrud in concert for the BBC Proms in 2004. She made her debut at Covent Garden in 1976 as Viclinda (*I Lombardi*) and her roles have included Leonora (*Fidelio*), Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth*), Odabella (*Attila*), Leonora (*Oberto*) and the title role in *Elektra* in 2003. Her recent roles include the title role in *Turandot* for Opera Australia, Isolde (*Tristan und Isolde*) in Hamburg and Abigaille (*Nabucco*) in Perth.

Irmgard Viltsmaier makes her debut with The Royal Opera in a role she has sung on numerous occasions, including for Hamburg Opera, De Vlaamse Opera as well as in Hamburg, Munich and Dresden. She will also sing the role for Glyndebourne Festival Opera in 2008. Recent roles include Brünnhilde (*Die Walküre*) in Trier and Third Norn (*Götterdämmerung*) in Munich.

Thomas Allen returns to Covent Garden to sing the role of Peter for the first time. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1971 and his more recent roles with the Company include Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*), Morone (*Palestrina*), Beckmesser (*Die Meistersinger von*

Nürnberg), the Music Master (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*), the title role in *Sweeney Todd*, Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Poeta (*Il turco in Italia*) and Speaker of the Temple (*Die Zauberflöte*).

He shares the role with German baritone **Eike Wilm Schulte** who previously sang the role in Munich in 2001. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Bishop Severolus (*Palestrina*) in 2001 and returned to sing Beckmesser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) in 2002. Recent roles include Kurwenal (*Parsifal*) and Speaker of the Temple (*Die Zauberflöte*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York and Don Pizarro (*Fidelio*) for Los Angeles Opera.

Jette Parker Young Artist South African soprano **Pumeza Matshikiza** sings the role of Sandman (Cast A) and Echo. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Flowermaiden (*Parsifal*) in 2007 and her roles during the 2007/8 Season include Slave (*Salome*), Innocent (*The Minotaur*) and Tebaldo (*Don Carlo*). Her roles in the 2008/9 Season include Second Witch (*Dido and Aeneas*).

Singing the role of Sandman (Cast B) and Echo is Japanese soprano **Eri Nakamura**, new to the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Fifth Maid in *Elektra* earlier in the Season. Her roles for the New National Theatre in Tokyo have included Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Marzelline (*Fidelio*) and Nanetta (*Falstaff*). Her roles this season also include First Witch (*Dido and Aeneas*) and Giannetta (*L'elisir d'amore*).

The role of Dew Fairy (Cast A) and Echo will be sung by Jette Parker Young Artist Australian soprano **Anita Watson**. She made her debut as a Flower Maiden (*Parsifal*) in 2007 and also sang First Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*). In June 2008 she will sing the offstage Voice from Heaven in *Don Carlo*. Her roles during the 2008/9 Season include Second Witch (*Dido and Aeneas*).

Making her debut with The Royal Opera singing the role of Dew Fairy (Cast B) and Echo is Romanian soprano **Simona Mihai**, one of the new members of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme. Recent roles include Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*) in Santiago, Roksana (*King Roger*) in Palermo and she will sing the role of La Virtu (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) for Glyndebourne Festival in 2008. Her roles during the 2008/9 Season for The Royal Opera include Juliette (*Die tote Stadt*) and 15-year-old Girl (*Lulu*).

Hänsel und Gretel was first performed at Covent Garden (together with *Cavalleria rusticana*) in 1896 with a cast which included Marie Elba as Hänsel and Jessie Huddleston as Gretel, conducted by Luigi Mancinelli. There were further performances of the opera in 1910, 1922 and 1931. The opera was last performed in 1937 with Maggie Teyte as Hansel, Olive Dyer as Gretel and Constance Willis as the Witch, conducted by Aylmer Buesst.

INSIGHT AFTERNOON

Saturday 29 November, 2.30pm – 5.30 pm

Tickets £17 (£6 Students and ROH Access List)

Clore Studio Upstairs

PRE-PERFORMANCE TALK

Tuesday 30 December at 5.00pm – 5.30pm

Clore Studio Upstairs

TURANDOT
Giacomo Puccini

22, 29 December, 2, 5, 8, 12, 14, 17, 20, 23 January at 7.30pm /
27 December at 7pm

Andrei Serban's production of *Turandot*, first seen in 1984, remains one of the most popular in The Royal Opera repertory. **Jeremy Sutcliffe** directs this revival at the Royal Opera House. Designs are by **Sally Jacobs** with lighting by **F. Mitchell Dana**. Original choreography is by **Kate Flatt** and will be rehearsed by **Ann Whitley**.

Italian conductor **Nicola Luisotti**, Music Director Designate of San Francisco Opera, returns to conduct all performances. He made his debut at Covent Garden in 2007 conducting *Il trovatore* and also conducted *Madama Butterfly* in the same Season.

Singing the title role is Swedish soprano **Irène Theorin** who sings the role for the first time for The Royal Opera. She made her debut in the role in 2005 in Copenhagen and has also sung Turandot in Dresden and Essen. She made her debut at The Royal Opera as Helmwige (*Die Walküre*) in 2005 and repeated the role in 2007. She also stepped into the role of Brünnhilde (*Siegfried*) for an indisposed Lisa Gasteen in 2007. Recent roles include Brünnhilde (*The Ring*) in Nürnberg and Dresden, Elisabetta (*Don Carlos*) in Copenhagen and Isolde (*Tristan und Isolde*) in Essen, a role she will repeat at this year's Bayreuth Festival.

Making her debut at Covent Garden is American soprano **Jennifer Wilson** who sings Turandot on 2, 5 and 8 January. She made her professional debut in the role for Connecticut Opera in 2002 and has also sung Turandot for Santa Fe Opera and Opera Australia. Recent roles include her role debut as Senta (*Der fliegende Holländer*) in Washington, Brünnhilde (*Die Walküre*) in Valencia and she also sang the roles of Helwige, Guttrune and Third Norn in the Lyric Opera of Chicago's *Ring Cycle* in 2005.

Returning for his second role of the Season is Argentinian tenor **José Cura** who sings Calaf. He sang the role of Dick Johnson (*La fanciulla del West*) at the beginning of the 2008/9 Season. He made his debut as Calaf in Verona in 2003 and has also sung the role in Zürich and Turin. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in the title role of *Stiffelio* in 1995 and his roles with the Company have included the title roles in *Otello*, *Andrea Chénier* (in concert), Samson (*Samson et Dalila*), Cavaradossi (*Tosca*), Ipanov (*Fedora*) and Manrico (*Il trovatore*). Recent roles include Pollione (*Norma*) and Canio (*Pagliacci*) in Vienna and Rodrigue (*Le Cid*) in Zürich.

South African tenor **Johan Botha** sings Calaf for three performances (2, 5, 8 January). He has previously sung the role at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Vienna, Los Angeles, La Scala, Milan and at the Salzburg Festival. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Rodolfo (*La bohème*) in 1995 and his roles with the Company have included Cavaradossi (*Tosca*), Emperor (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Apollo (*Daphne*) in concert and Radames (*Aida*). His recent roles have included the title role in *Otello* in Vienna and for the Metropolitan Opera, New York as well as Florestan (*Fidelio*) and Siegmund (*Die Walküre*) in Vienna.

Singing the role of Liù is Bulgarian soprano **Svetla Vassileva**. She has previously sung the role for Los Angeles Opera, at the Vienna Staatsoper, for San Francisco Opera and for the New Israeli Opera. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Violetta (*La traviata*) at the Royal Albert Hall in 1998 and sang Nedda (*Pagliacci*) for one performance

at the Royal Opera House in July 2003. Recent roles include Magda (*La rondine*) at the Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago and the title role in *Rusalka* in Turin.

She shares the role with American soprano **Latonia Moore**, also making her debut at Covent Garden in the role of Liù. She has previously sung the role in Dresden. Her recent roles include Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) in Hamburg, Micaëla (*Carmen*) for the New York City Opera, Cio-Cio-San (*Madama Butterfly*) in Trieste and Elvira (*Ernani*) in Vienna.

Georgian bass **Paata Burchuladze** returns to Covent Garden to sing the role of Timur for the first time with The Royal Opera. He has previously sung the role of Timur at Salzburg in 2002. He made his debut at Covent Garden in 1984 as Ramfis in *Aida*. Subsequent roles with The Royal Opera have included Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), the title role in *Boris Godunov*, Konchak (*Prince Igor*), Inquisitor (*The Fiery Angel*), Tsar Dodon (*The Golden Cockerel*) and the title role in *Attila*. Recent roles include Chowansky (*Khovanshchina*) in Munich and Padre Guardino (*La forza del destino*) in Tel Aviv.

Returning to the role of Timur for three performances (2, 5, 8 January) is Jamaican bass-baritone **Willard W. White**. He has previously sung the role for The Royal Opera in 1997 and 2001. He made his Royal Opera debut in 1978 as Don Diègo (*L'Africaine*) and his numerous roles with the Company include Duke Bluebeard (*Duke Bluebeard's Castle*), Grand Inquisitor (*Don Carlos*), Orest (*Elektra*), Four Villains (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Ferrando (*Il trovatore*), Don Pizarro (*Fidelio*), Fafner (*Das Rheingold, Siegfried*), Priest Fotis (*The Greek Passion*) and most recently Klingsor (*Parsifal*).

Italian baritone **Giorgio Caoduro** makes his Royal Opera debut as Ping, a role he has sung previously in Turin and for La Fenice. He made his debut for Glyndebourne in 2005 singing the role of Dandini (*La Cenerentola*). Recent roles include the title role in *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, Figaro (*Il barbiere di Figaro*) for Dallas Opera and Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*) in Turin.

Jette Parker Young Artist Korean tenor **Ji-Min Park** sings the role of Pang for the first time with The Royal Opera. He made his debut as Third Esquire (*Parsifal*) in 2007 and his roles for The Royal Opera have included Gastone de Letorières (*La traviata*) and Fourth Jew (*Salome*). He will sing the role of Scaramuccio (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in June 2008.

Singing the role of Pong is British tenor **Alasdair Elliott**. He previously sang the role for The Royal Opera in 2006 and has also sung the role in Madrid. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1992 as Ruodi (*Guillaume Tell*) and his recent roles for the Company include Master of Ceremonies (*The Queen of Spades*), Gozo (*Madama Butterfly*) and Brighella (*Ariadne auf Naxos*).

Welsh tenor **Robert Tear** returns to the role of Emperor Altoum which he last sang for The Royal Opera in Los Angeles in 1984. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1970 and his more recent roles with the Company include Dr Caius (*Falstaff*), Beadle (*Sweeney Todd*), Ringmaster (*The Bartered Bride*) and Alcindoro (*La bohème*).

Lithuanian bass-baritone **Kostas Smoriginas**, also a member of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, sings the role of Mandarin. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House as Marquis d'Obigny (*La traviata*) in January 2008 and he will sing the role of Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season will include Bello (*La fanciulla del West*), Schlemil (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Journalist (*Lulu*) and Third Noble (*Lohengrin*) as well as a return to the roles of Marquis d'Obigny (*La traviata*) and Angelotti (*Tosca*).

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Realized by Benjamin Britten

20, 22, 23, 27, 28 29, 30, 31 January at 7.30pm / 24, 25 January at 7pm

NEW PRODUCTION

THE ROYAL OPERA IN THE LINBURY

New Production generously supported by The Friends of Covent Garden

John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* is heard for the first time at Covent Garden in an arrangement written by Benjamin Britten in 1948. This arrangement was first performed in 1948 in Cambridge, directed by Tyrone Guthrie and conducted by the composer, with Peter Pears in the role of Macheath.

Australian director **Justin Way**, currently a Staff Director with The Royal Opera, directs his first opera in the Linbury Studio Theatre. He has previously directed *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* for Chicago Opera Theatre, *Alcina* and *Orlando* for Opera Australia and assisted on numerous productions at Covent Garden including *The Tempest* and *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*. Designs are by **Kimm Kovac** and **Andrew Hays**.

Richard Hickox, Music Director of Opera Australia, returns to the Linbury Studio Theatre to conduct all performances with the **City of London Sinfonia** having conducted *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2005. He has previously conducted *Paul Bunyan*, *Billy Budd*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Mitridate, re di Ponto* and *A Midsummer Marriage* for The Royal Opera.

Singing the role of Macheath for the first time is American tenor **Thomas Randle**. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Johnny Inkslinger (*Paul Bunyan*) in 1997 and returned to sing A Fool (*Gawain*) in 2000. His recent roles include Tom Rakewell (*The Rake's Progress*) in Paris, the Drum Major (*Wozzeck*) for La Monnaie, Brussels and Prince Andrei Khovansky (*Khovanshchina*) for Welsh National Opera.

Welsh mezzo-soprano **Leah-Marian Jones** makes her role debut as Polly Peachum. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Zulma (*L'italiana in Algeri*) in 1993 and her many roles with the Company include Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Varvara (*Kát'a Kabanová*), Flosshilde (*Das Rheingold, Götterdämmerung*), Flora Bervoix (*La traviata*), Karolka (*Jenůfa*) and Maddalena (*Rigoletto*).

British soprano **Sarah Fox** sings the role of Lucy Lockit. She made her debut at Covent Garden as Frantik (*The Cunning Little Vixen*) and her other roles for The Royal Opera include Woglinde (*Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*), Woodbird (*Siegfried*) and Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*).

Company Principal bass **Jeremy White** sings the role of Peachum. His many roles for The Royal Opera include Truffaldino (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Betto di Signa (*Gianni Schicchi*), Kuligin (*Kát'a Kabanová*) and Snug (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). His roles during the 2008/9 Season include José Castro (*La fanciulla del West*), Benoit (*La bohème*) and Old Servant (*Elektra*).

The role of Mrs Peachum is sung by British mezzo-soprano **Susan Bickley** who makes her debut in the role. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 1991 as Fyodor (*Boris Godunov*) and her roles for the Company have included Aksinya (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*) and Ludmila (*The Bartered Bride*). Recent roles have included Mistress Quickly (*Falstaff*) and Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*) for Opera North.

The role of Lockit is sung by British baritone **Donald Maxwell**. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House in 1987 and his roles have included Baron Zeta (*The Merry Widow*), Dr Bartolo (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Krušina (*The Bartered Bride*), Hortensius (*La Fille du régiment*) and most recently Second Priest (*Die Zauberflöte*).

British mezzo-soprano **Frances McCafferty** sings the role of Diana Trapes. Her recent appearances with The Royal Opera include the Governess (*The Queen of Spades*), Yetta Zimmerman (*Sophie's Choice*), Xenia's Nurse (*Boris Godunov*) and Duenna (*Cyrano de Bergerac*). She appeared earlier in the Season as First Maid in *Elektra*.

The role of Filtch is sung by Jette Parker Young Artist British tenor **Robert Anthony Gardiner**. He made his Royal Opera debut earlier in the season singing Egoldo (*Matilde di Shabran*).

The Beggar's Opera was originally produced on 29 January 1728 by the Theatre Manager John Rich at Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre and was the first musical show to mix dialogue with songs. A story of thieves and highwaymen, it was intended to mirror the moral degradation of society and, more particularly, to caricature the then Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole. It ran for 62 performances, the longest run then known, and the success of the production enabled John Rich to build a new theatre at Covent Garden, the forerunner of the Royal Opera House. *The Beggar's Opera* was first heard at Covent Garden in 1732.

DIE TOTE STADT **Erich Wolfgang Korngold**

27, 30 January, 2, 5, 11, 13, 17 February at 7.30pm

PRODUCTION NEW TO THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

FROM A CO-PRODUCTION OF THE VIENNA STATE OPERA AND THE SALZBURG FESTIVAL 2004

Korngold's first opera, *Die tote Stadt*, receives its first performance at Covent Garden and first UK staged premiere. The opera, based on a short novel by Georges Rodenbach, was premiered in 1920 and was one of the greatest hits of the 1920s, though it was subsequently banned by the Nazi regime because of Korngold's Jewish ancestry.

Willy Decker's production of *Die tote Stadt* was first seen at the Salzburg Festival in 2004. Designs are by **Wolfgang Gussman** and lighting by **Wolfgang Goebbel**. The production has also been seen in Vienna in 2004 and 2006, Amsterdam in 2005, Barcelona in 2006 and will be seen in San Francisco in September 2008.

German conductor **Ingo Metzmacher**, Principal Conductor of the Deutsches Symphonie Orchester in Berlin, makes his debut at Covent Garden conducting all performances. He has previously conducted *Die tote Stadt* for De Nederlandse Oper in 2005.

American tenor **Stephen Gould** makes his debut at Covent Garden in the role of Paul, a role he previously sang in Berlin in 2004. Recent roles include the title role in *Tannhäuser* in Paris, Erik (*Der fliegende Holländer*) in Munich, the title role in *Siegfried* in Berlin and Siegfried in the *Ring* cycle in Bayreuth in 2006 and 2007.

Singing the role of Paul for two performances is German tenor **Torsten Kerl**, who makes his debut at the Royal Opera House. He has sung the role in Paris and Strasbourg in 2001 and also sang the role at the premiere of this production in Salzburg in 2004 as well as subsequent performances in Vienna, Amsterdam and Barcelona. He will also sing the role in this production in San Francisco in 2008. He returns to The Royal Opera later in the 2008/9 Season to sing the role of Erik in a new production of *Der fliegende Holländer*.

Singing the role of Marie/Marietta is German soprano **Nadja Michael**. She has previously sung the role in Amsterdam in 2005. She made her debut at the Royal Opera House in the role of Varvara (*Kát'a Kabanová*) and returned in 2001 to sing Pauline (*The Queen of Spades*). In 2005 she moved into the soprano fach and made her debut as Tosca in St Gallen. She was recently heard at Covent Garden in the title role in *Salome*.

Making his role debut as Frank/Fritz is Canadian baritone **Gerald Finley**. He made his debut in 1989 and his roles with The Royal Opera have included Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*), the title roles in *Eugene Onegin* and *Don Giovanni*, Gamekeeper (*The Cunning Little Vixen*), Creonte (*L'anima del filosofo*), Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Prince Yeletsky (*The Queen of Spades*) and Golaud (*Pelléas et Mélisande*). Recent roles include Robert Oppenheimer (*Doctor Atomic*) in Chicago and Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Salzburg.

British mezzo-soprano **Kathleen Wilkinson** makes her debut in the role of Brigitta, her second role of the 2008/9 Season, having earlier sung Third Maid in *Elektra*. She makes her debut with The Royal Opera as Mother Goose (*The Rake's Progress*) in July 2008. Her recent roles include Mrs Herring (*Albert Herring*) for Glyndebourne Touring Opera and Filipyevna (*Eugene Onegin*) for Welsh National Opera.

Also making his debut with The Royal Opera as well as his role debut is Swiss tenor **Bernard Richter** who sings Gastone/Victorin. He made his debut at the Salzburg Festival in 2005 as Guidobaldo (*Die Gezeichneten*) in 2005 and returned in 2007 to sing Clotario (*Armida*). Recent roles also include the title role of *Idomeneo* in Freiburg and Medoro (*Orlando Paladino*) in Vienna.

Jette Parker Young Artist Korean tenor **Ji-Min Park** sings the role of Kleine Graf. He made his debut as Third Esquire (*Parsifal*) in 2007 and his roles for The Royal Opera have included Gastone de Letorières (*La traviata*) and Fourth Jew (*Salome*). He will sing the role of Scaramuccio (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season include Pang (*Turandot*), Coridon (*Acis and Galatea*) and Second Noble (*Lohengrin*).

Jette Parker Young Artist Romanian soprano **Simona Mihai** sings the role of Juliette. Recent roles include Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*) in Santiago and Roksana (*King Roger*) in Palermo and she will sing the role of La Virtu (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) for Glyndebourne in 2008. She made her Royal Opera debut earlier in the Season as Dew Fairy (*Hänsel und Gretel*) and she will also sing 15 Year Old Girl (*Lulu*) later in the Season.

Making her debut at the Royal Opera House is Lithuanian mezzo-soprano **Jurgita Adamonyte** who sings the role of Lucienne. Recent roles include Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Salzburg Festival's production in Japan and Idamantes (*Idomeneo*) in Amsterdam.

RIGOLETTO

Giuseppe Verdi

10, 12, 16, 18, 25 February at 7.30pm / 14 February at 7pm / 1 March at 12.30pm

One of Verdi's most popular works returns in **David McVicar's** production which first opened in 2001. Set designs are by **Michael Vale**, costume designs by **Tanya McCallin** and lighting by **Paule Constable**. **Leah Hausman** is the movement director.

Israeli conductor **Daniel Oren** conducts all performances of this fourth revival of *Rigoletto*. He has previously conducted *La bohème*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca* and *La Juive* in concert for The Royal Opera. He returns later in the 2008/9 Season to conduct *Tosca*.

Returning to Covent Garden is Italian baritone **Leo Nucci** in the title role. He has previously sung *Rigoletto* at Covent Garden in Nuria Espert's production in 1991 and 1994. He made his debut at Covent Garden in 1978 in the role of Miller (*Luisa Miller*) and his roles have included Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*), Ford (*Falstaff*), Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*) and most recently Canio (*Pagliacci*) in 2003.

Sharing the title role is Italian baritone **Paolo Gavanelli** who returns to the role he created in this production in 2001 and also sang in 2005. He has also sung *Rigoletto* for the Metropolitan Opera, New York and Vienna Staatsoper as well as in San Francisco and Verona. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1997 as Iago (*Otello*) and his roles for the Company have included the title roles in *Simon Boccanegra* and *Falstaff*, Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*) and Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*). Recent roles include Nottingham (*Roberto Devereux*) and Miller (*Luisa Miller*) in Munich. He returns to Covent Garden in May 2008 as Baron Scarpia (*Tosca*).

Making his debut at Covent Garden in the role of Duke of Mantua is Italian tenor **Francesco Meli**. He will also sing the role in Madrid in 2009. Recent roles include Leicester (*Maria Stuarda*) at La Scala, Milan, Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Fenton (*Falstaff*) in Turin and Count Almaviva (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) in Verona.

Russian soprano **Ekaterina Siurina** returns to the role of Gilda which she sang for The Royal Opera in 2005. She has previously sung the role at the Metropolitan Opera, New York and with Novaja Opera at the Savonlinna Festival. She made her debut at the Royal Opera House as Olympia (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) in 2004. Recent roles include Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*) in Paris and Ilia (*Idomeneo*) at the Salzburg Festival. She will return to Salzburg in 2008 to sing Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*).

Making her debut in the role of Maddalena is British mezzo-soprano **Sara Fulgoni**. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 2004 as Federica (*Luisa Miller*) and she returns later in the 2008/9 Season to sing the role of Sorceress (*Dido and Aeneas*). Recent roles include Judith (*Duke Bluebeard's Castle*) at the Liceu, Barcelona, Margret (*Wozzeck*) for La Monnaie, Brussels and the title role in *Carmen* in Valencia.

Austrian bass **Kurt Rydl** sings the role of Sparafucile, which he last sang for The Royal Opera in 2002. He made his debut at Covent Garden in 1993 as Rocco (*Fidelio*) and his roles for The Royal Opera have included Zaccaria (*Nabucco*), Grand Inquisitor (*Don Carlos*), Hagen (*Götterdämmerung*), Cardinal Madruscht (*Palestrina*), Baron Ochs (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Osmin (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Doctor (*Wozzeck*) and Kaspar (*Der Freischütz*) in concert.

The role of Monterone is sung by Scottish bass-baritone **Iain Paterson**. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House as Count Lamoral (*Arabella*) in 2004 and returned to sing the role of Le Bret (*Cyrano de Bergerac*) in 2006 and First Nazarene (*Salome*) in 2008. Recent roles include Schaunard (*La bohème*) and Amonasro (*Aida*) for English National Opera

Jette Parker Young Artist South African bass **Vuyani Mlinde** sings the role of Count Ceprano. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Second Man in Armour (*Die Zauberflöte*) in 2008 and his roles during his first year on the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme include A Cappadocian (*Salome*), Zaretsky (*Eugene Onegin*) and Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*). His roles during the 2008/9 Season include Orestes's Tutor (*Elektra*) Fourth Noble (*Lohengrin*) and Tom (*Un ballo in maschera*).

The role of Marullo is sung by Jette Parker Young Artist Korean baritone **Changan Lim** who made his debut earlier in the 2008/9 Season as Hermann (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*). Recent roles include Monk (*Curlew River*) and Marcello (*La bohème*) in France.

Elizabeth Sikora returns to the role of Giovanna which she sang in the original production in 2001 and in each subsequent revival. Her recent appearances with The Royal Opera include Mother Superior (*Cyrano de Bergerac*), Masha (*The Queen of Spades*), Old Woman (*The Greek Passion*), Annina (*La traviata*), Rosswisse (*Die Walküre*), Third Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Filipyevna (*Eugene Onegin*).

Making his debut as Matteo Borsa is British tenor **Daniel Norman**. Recent roles include Peter Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*) for Glyndebourne on Tour, Count Elemer (*Arabella*) for Garsington and Scaramuccio (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in Paris.

DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER

Richard Wagner

23, 26 February, 4, 10 March at 8pm / 1 March at 7.30pm / 7 March at 12.30pm

NEW PRODUCTION

New Production generously supported by The Friends of Covent Garden and Jean and Hélène Peters (Benefactors)

Tim Albery returns to Covent Garden to direct a new production of Wagner's *Die fliegende Holländer*. He has previously directed *Chérubin* (1994) and *Nabucco* (1996) for The Royal Opera. Set Designs are by **Michael Levine** and costumes by **Constance Hoffman**.

Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg, **Marc Albrecht** makes his debut with The Royal Opera conducting this new production of *Der fliegende Holländer*. He has previously conducted *Der fliegende Holländer* for the Bayreuth Festival (2003 - 2006). Recent operas he has conducted at the Semperoper Dresden include *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and *La Damnation de Faust* and he will conduct Henze's *Die Bassariden* in Munich in spring 2008.

Welsh bass-baritone **Bryn Terfel** sings the title role for the first time at Covent Garden, a role he has sung previously for Welsh National Opera in 2006. Bryn Terfel made his debut at Covent Garden in 1992 in *Don Giovanni* singing Masetto. Subsequent roles with The Royal Opera include Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Jokanaan (*Salome*), Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), the title

roles in *Don Giovanni* and *Falstaff* and Méphistophélès (*Faust*). He has most recently sung Wotan (*Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*), Scarpia (*Tosca*) and the title role in *Gianni Schicchi* for The Royal Opera.

Making her debut at Covent Garden as Senta is German soprano **Anja Kampe**. She made her debut in the role in December 2005 at La Monnaie, Brussels and has subsequently sung the role in Munich and at the New National Theatre in Tokyo. Recent roles include Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) in Washington, her role debut as Leonora (*Fidelio*) in Los Angeles and Lisa (*The Queen of Spades*) in Frankfurt.

Singing the role of Daland is German bass **Hans-Peter Koenig**. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*) in 2008 and returned to sing Prince Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*) later in the Season. A member of the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, he has previously sung the role of Daland in Dusseldorf and also in Hamburg and Bilbao. Recent roles include Fafner (*Siegfried*) and Hagen (*Götterdämmerung*) in Bayreuth and Hermann in *Tannhäuser* in Hamburg.

German tenor **Torsten Kerl** who made his Royal Opera debut earlier in the Season as Paul (*Die Tote Stadt*) sings the role of Erik. He has previously sung the role in Vienna in 2003, for Deutsche Oper Berlin in 2004 and for La Monnaie, Brussels in 2005. Recent roles include Paul (*Die Tote Stadt*) in San Francisco, Florestan (*Fidelio*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Menelas (*Die ägyptische Helena*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Pedro (*Tiefland*) in Berlin and the title role of *Tannhäuser* in Cologne.

Also making his Royal Opera debut is Canadian tenor **John Tessier** who sings the role of Steersman for the first time. Recent roles include Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Fenton (*Falstaff*) for New York City Opera as well as Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) and Lindoro (*L'Italiana in Algeri*) in Vancouver.

Clare Shearer sings the role of Mary for the first time, her second role of the Season, having reprised the role of Wowkle (*La fanciulla del West*) earlier in the Season. Her roles with The Royal Opera have included Grimgerde and Siegrune (*Die Walküre*).

Der fliegende Holländer was last seen at Covent Garden in 2000 in Ian Judge's production from 1992. The cast, conducted by Simone Young, included Bernd Weikl in the title role, with Solveig Kringelborn as Senta, Kurt Moll as Daland and Kim Begley as Erik.

I CAPULETI E I MONTECCHI

Vincenzo Bellini

2, 5, 7, 30 March, 2, 7, 11 April at 7.30pm

Generously supported by Thespina and Trifon Natsis (Ambassadors)

In 1984 **Pier Luigi Pizzi** directed and designed The Royal Opera's production of Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* which was subsequently revived in 1985, 1992, 2001 and now returns to Covent Garden for the 2008/9 Season, once again directed by Pier Luigi Pizzi.

This revival is conducted by **Mark Elder**, Music Director of the Hallé Orchestra. Recent operas he has conducted for The Royal Opera include *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*,

Turandot, La bohème, Simon Boccanegra, Stiffelio, Dom Sébastien in concert and he conducts *Ariadne auf Naxos* for The Royal Opera in June 2008.

Russian soprano **Anna Netrebko** sings the role of Giulietta for the first time with The Royal Opera. She has previously sung the role at the Salzburg Festival in 2004 and also for Philadelphia Opera. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*) in 2002 and has subsequently returned to Covent Garden to sing Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*), Gilda (*Rigoletto*) and Violetta (*La traviata*).

Singing the role of Romeo for the first time in a staged production is Latvian mezzo-soprano **Elīna Garanča**. She has previously sung the role in concert in Riga and also in Vienna in April 2008. She made her Royal Opera debut as Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) in 2007. Recent roles include the title role of Carmen in Riga, Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in Vienna and Berlin and her debut at the Metropolitan Opera, New York as Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*).

Italian bass **Giovanni Battista Parodi** sings the role of Lorenzo. He made his Royal Opera House debut in 2001 as Monterone (*Rigoletto*), returning to the role in 2005. He has also sung Samuel (*Un ballo in maschera*) for The Royal Opera and returns to the role later in the Season.

Singing the role of Tebaldo for the first time is Argentinian tenor **Darío Schmunck**. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Léopold (*La Juive*) in concert at the Barbican. Recent roles include Leicester (*Maria Stuarda*) for La Scala, Milan and Berlin, Alfredo (*La traviata*) for La Fenice and the Duke of Mantua (*Rigoletto*) in Toulouse.

American bass-baritone **Eric Owens** sings the role of Capellio. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Oroveso in concert performances of *Norma* in 2000. Recent roles include General Leslie Groves (*Doctor Atomic*) in Chicago and Amsterdam and concert performances of John Adams' *A Flowering Tree* at the Barbican Centre, London.

MESSA DA REQUIEM

Giuseppe Verdi

Friday 13 March at 7.30pm - ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Friday 20 March at 7.30pm – BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY HALL

Music Director **Antonio Pappano**, now in his seventh Season with The Royal Opera, conducts Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*. He also conducts six productions during the course of the 2008/9 Season: *Don Giovanni*, *La fanciulla del West*, a new production of *Lulu*, *La traviata*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* as well as concert performances of Britten's *War Requiem*.

Italian soprano **Barbara Frittoli** returns to the Royal Opera House to sing a role she has sung numerous times under the batons of Riccardo Muti, Zubin Mehta and Gianandrea Noseda. She made her debut at the Royal Opera House in 1994 as Micaëla (*Carmen*) and her roles for The Royal Opera have included Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), Vitellia (*La clemenza di Tito*), the title role in *Luisa Miller* and she will sing Countess Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in July 2008. Recent roles include *Suor Angelica* for the Metropolitan Opera, New York and at La Scala, Milan, Tatyana (*Eugene Onegin*) in Chicago and Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) in Vienna.

Also returning to The Royal Opera for this concert performance is Russian mezzo-soprano **Olga Borodina**. She has previously sung *Messa da Requiem* at Carnegie Hall under James Levine. She made her debut at Covent Garden in 1992 as Dalila (*Samson et Dalila*) and her subsequent roles have included Marguerite (*La Damnation de Faust*), Angelina (*La Cenerentola*) and Marina Mniszek (*Boris Godunov*).

Joining Barbara Frittoli and Olga Borodina on the concert platform is Polish tenor **Piotr Beczala**. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier* in 2004 and has returned to sing the title role in *Faust*, the Duke of Mantua (*Rigoletto*) and Lensky (*Eugene Onegin*).

Making his debut with The Royal Opera for this concert performance is Russian bass **Ildar Abdrazakov**. Recent roles include Méphistophélès (*Faust*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, the title role of *Attila* in Amsterdam and the title role in *Don Giovanni* in Washington.

The Royal Opera last performed Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* in June 1999 at the Royal Festival Hall with Paula Delligatti, Petra Lang, Franco Farina and Roberto Scandiuizzi, conducted by Bernard Haitink.

WAR REQUIEM

Benjamin Britten

Saturday 21 March at 7.30pm – BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY HALL

Having presented Britten's *War Requiem* at the Royal Albert Hall in November 2008, The Royal Opera presents a further concert performance in Birmingham on Saturday 21 March 2009. With text taken from the Requiem Mass and poems by Wilfred Owen, this great commemorative war elegy was first performed in Coventry Cathedral on 30 May 1962 to great critical and popular acclaim.

Music Director **Antonio Pappano** conducts this concert performance, having conducted the performance at the Royal Albert Hall earlier in the Season. He marked his opening concert as Music Director with the Santa Cecilia Orchestra in Rome in 2005 with a performance of Britten's *War Requiem* and has also conducted the work in Los Angeles.

In addition to conducting to the *War Requiem*, Antonio Pappano will conduct a performance of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* and six productions during the course of the 2008/09 Season: *Don Giovanni*, *La fanciulla del West*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, a new production of *Lulu*, *La traviata* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

The part of the English soldier, originally written for Peter Pears, will be sung by the British tenor **Ian Bostridge** who sang the role for The Royal Opera in 1999 and also at the Royal Albert Hall earlier in the Season. Ian Bostridge made his Royal Opera House debut in 1995 as Third Jew (*Salome*). His roles for The Royal Opera have included Peter Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*), Vasek (*The Bartered Bride*) and Caliban (*The Tempest*). He also sings Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) in September 2008. Recent concert performances include Schubert's *Schwanengesang* with Antonio Pappano in Glasgow.

The role of the German soldier will be sung by British baritone **Simon Keenlyside**. He has previously sung the role in 2004 at the BBC Proms. He made his Royal Opera debut in 1989 as Silvio (*Pagliacci*) and his roles for the Company include the title roles in *Don Giovanni*, *Billy Budd* and *Hamlet*, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Valentin (*Faust*), Winston (*1984*), Prospero (*The Tempest*), Pelléas (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) and Oreste (*Iphigénie en Tauride*). He will sing the role of Rodrigo in a new production of *Don Carlo* for The Royal Opera in June 2008.

British soprano **Emma Bell** takes the role of the soprano soloist for the first time. She made her Royal Opera House debut as Leonora (*Maskarade*) in 2005 and sings the role of Donna Elivra (*Don Giovanni*) at the start of the 2008/09 Season. Her recent roles include the title role in *Alcina* in Paris, Miss Jessel (*The Turn of the Screw*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Vitellia (*La clemenza di Tito*) and Violetta (*La traviata*) both for ENO.

The Royal Opera also performed Britten's *War Requiem* at the Barbican Hall, London and at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris in October 1999 conducted by the then Music Director Bernard Haitink. The cast included Ian Bostridge, Thomas Hampson and Russian soprano Marina Mescheriakova.

DIDO AND AENEAS / ACIS AND GALATEA

Henry Purcell / George Frideric Handel

31 March, 3, 8, 15, 20 April at 7.30pm / 11 April at 12.30pm / 18 April at 7pm

The Royal Opera presents a new double bill created by **Wayne McGregor**, The Royal Ballet's resident choreographer. Both productions will unite the performing companies at the Royal Opera House with dancers from The Royal Ballet performing alongside artists from The Royal Opera. Two major Baroque composers are commemorated in this double bill: Henry Purcell born 350 years ago in 1659 and George Frideric Handel who died 250 years ago in 1759.

Wayne McGregor's operatic credits include *La bohème*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Hänsel and Gretel*, *Orpheus et Eurydice* for Scottish Opera, *Salome* for English National Opera, *Manon* for English Touring Opera and *The Mikado* and *Rinaldo* for Grange Park Opera.

DIDO AND AENEAS

PRODUCTION NEW TO THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Wayne McGregor's production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* was first seen at La Scala, Milan in July 2006. Set designs are by **Hildegard Bechtler**, costume designs by **Fotini Dimou** and video design by **Mark Hatchard**.

Christopher Hogwood, Emeritus Director of the Academy of Ancient Music, returns to the Royal Opera House to conduct the **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** in this double bill. He made his debut with The Royal Opera conducting *L'anima del filosofo* in 2001 and conducted this production of *Dido and Aeneas* at La Scala in 2006. Most recently he has worked at Leipzig Opera conducting performances of *La Clemenza di Tito* and was this year's recipient of the Halle Handel Prize.

Making her Royal Opera debut as Dido is British mezzo-soprano **Sarah Connolly**. She sang Dido in this production at La Scala, Milan and has also sung the role at La Monnaie, Brussels. Recent roles include Orfeo (*Orfeo ed Euridice*) in Munich, the title role in *Agrippina* for English National Opera, the title role in *Giulio Cesare* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Annio (*La clemenza di Tito*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

Also making his Royal Opera House debut is American baritone **Lucas Meachem** who sings the role of Aeneas. He recently made his debut with the Metropolitan Opera, New York as General Rayevsky (*War and Peace*) and his debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2006 as Orestes (*Iphigénie en Tauride*).

British mezzo-soprano **Sara Fulgoni** returns to sing Sorceress, her second role of the Season, having sung Maddalena (*Rigoletto*) earlier in the 2008/9 Season. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 2004 as Federica (*Luisa Miller*). Her recent roles include Judith (*Duke Bluebeard's Castle*) at the Liceu, Barcelona, Margret (*Wozzeck*) for La Monnaie, Brussels and the title role in *Carmen* in Valencia.

Another newcomer to Covent Garden is British soprano **Lucy Crowe** who sings the role of Belinda. She has previously sung the role of Galatea in concert at the Aldeburgh Festival. Her recent operatic roles include Drusilla (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) for English National Opera, Elisa (*Il re pastore*) at Garsington Opera and Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*) for Scottish Opera.

The role of Spirit (Mercury) is sung by British counter tenor **Iestyn Davies**, making his debut and role debut with The Royal Opera. He made his debut as Ottone in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* for Zurich Opera, and his operatic roles have included Hamor (*Jeptha*), L'Humana Fragilità and Pisandro (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*) for Welsh National Opera and roles in *King Arthur* for English National Opera. He will return to the role of Ottone (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera in 2008.

Singing the role of First Witch is Japanese soprano **Eri Nakamura**, new to the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, who made her debut with The Royal Opera as Fifth Maid in *Elektra* earlier in the Season. Her roles for the New National Theatre in Tokyo have included Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Marzelline (*Fidelio*) and Nanetta (*Falstaff*). Her roles for The Royal Opera this season also include Sandman and Echo (*Hänsel und Gretel*), and Giannetta (*L'elisir d'amore*).

Jette Parker Young Artist South African soprano **Pumeza Matshikiza** sings the role of Second Witch. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Sixth Flowermaid (*Parsifal*) in 2007 and her roles during the 2007/8 Season include Slave (*Salome*), Innocent (*The Minotaur*) and Tebaldo (*Don Carlo*). Her roles in the 2008/9 Season include Sandman and Echo (*Hänsel und Gretel*).

The role of Second Woman is sung by Jette Parker Young Artist Australian soprano **Anita Watson**. She made her debut as Flower Maiden (*Parisfal*) in 2007 and also sang First Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*). In June 2008 she will sing the offstage Voice from Heaven (*Don Carlo*). Her roles during the 2008/9 Season include Dew Fairy (*Hänsel und Gretel*).

Jette Parker Young Artist Korean tenor **Ji-Min Park** sings the role of First Sailor for The Royal Opera. He made his debut as Third Esquire (*Parsifal*) in 2007 and his roles for the Company have included Gastone de Letorières (*La traviata*) and Fourth Jew (*Salome*). He will sing the role of Scaramuccio (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in June 2008 and his roles during the 2008/9 Season include Pang (*Turandot*), Kleiner Graf (Lulu) and Second Noble (*Lobengrin*).

Casting from The Royal Ballet will be announced at a later date.

Dido and Aeneas has not been previously performed by The Royal Opera. It was first heard at the Royal Opera House in 1995 as part of the English Bach Festival, with further performances by The Musical Compass in the Linbury Studio Theatre in 2002.

ACIS AND GALATEA

NEW PRODUCTION

The Royal Opera presents Handel's *Acis and Galatea* for the first time in a newly-created production by The Royal Ballet's resident choreographer **Wayne McGregor**. Set designs are by **Hildegard Bechtler**.

Christopher Hogwood, who also conducts *Dido and Aeneas* in this double bill, will conduct the **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment**.

Returning to Covent Garden to sing the title role of Acis for the first time is American tenor **Charles Workman**. He made his Royal Opera debut as Prunier (*La rondine*) in 2002. Recent roles have included Jupiter (*Semele*) in Zurich, Flamand (*Capriccio*) Albert Gregor (*The Makropoulos Case*), Prince (*The Love of Three Oranges*) and the title role in *Idomeneo* with L'Opéra National de Paris.

Australian-born American soprano **Danielle de Niese** makes her Royal Opera debut singing the role of Galatea for the first time. She made her debut at Glyndebourne Festival Opera in 2005 as Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*), a role she has subsequently sung at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, La Monnaie, Brussels and in Chicago. Recent roles also include Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and Despina (*Così fan tutte*) at Netherlands Opera and Ginevra (*Ariodante*) in Paris.

Making his debut in the role of Polyphemus is British bass **Matthew Rose**. A former Young Artist, he made his debut at the Royal Opera House as Jonas Fogg (*Sweeney Todd*) in 2004 and his roles have included Sciarrone (*Tosca*), Wagner (*Faust*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Schlemil (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Montano (*Otello*), Tom (*Un ballo in maschera*), Zuniga (*Carmen*) and Albert (*La Juive*) in concert, Masetto (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and most recently Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). His recent roles have also included Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) in Madrid, Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Colline (*La bohème*) for English National Opera, and Figaro (*The Marriage of Figaro*) for Welsh National Opera.

Scottish tenor **Paul Agnew**, a leading interpreter of the French baroque haute-contre roles, makes his debut with The Royal Opera singing the role of Damon. He made his Paris opera debut singing the title role in *Hippolyte et Aricie*. Recent roles include Septimus (*Theodora*) and the title role in *Thésée* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris.

Jette Parker Young Artist Korean tenor **Ji-Min Park** sings the role of Coridon, having also sung the role of First Sailor (*Dido and Aeneas*) in this double bill for The Royal Opera. He made his debut as Third Esquire (*Parsifal*) in 2007 and his roles for the Company have included Gastone de Letorières (*La traviata*) and Fourth Jew (*Salome*). He will sing the role of Scaramuccio (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season include Pang (*Turandot*), Kleiner Graf (*Lulu*) and Second Noble (*Lobengrin*).

Acis and Galatea, with libretto by John Gay, was first performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden (the name of the first theatre on the Royal Opera House site) in 1736. It received further performances in 1824 in the second Theatre Royal.

IL TROVATORE

Giuseppe Verdi

13, 17, 21, 29 April, 2, 7 May at 7.30pm / 25 April at 7pm

Elijah Moshinsky's production of *Il trovatore*, originally seen at Covent Garden in 2002 and revived in 2004 and 2007, returns for its third revival. Set designs are by **Dante Ferretti**, costume designs by **Anne Tilby** and lighting by **Mike Gunning**.

Carlo Rizzi, Music Director of Welsh National Opera, conducts all performances of *Il trovatore*. He conducted the production when it was first new in 2002. He has previously conducted *La Cenerentola*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Così fan tutte*, *Il viaggio a Reims*, *Madama Butterfly*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, *Otello*, *La traviata*, *Elisabetta* in concert and *Tosca* for The Royal Opera.

French-born Sicilian tenor **Roberto Alagna** returns to The Royal Opera to sing the role of Manrico. He made his debut in the role in 2001 in Montecarlo and has also sung the role in Paris, Florence, Tokyo, Palermo and at Les Chorégies d'Orange. He made his Covent Garden debut as Rodolfo in *La bohème* in 1992 and his roles for The Royal Opera have included Roméo (*Roméo et Juliette*), Alfredo (*La traviata*), Cavaradossi (*Tosca*), Ruggero (*La rondine*), the title role in *Don Carlos* and most recently *Faust* in 2004. His recent roles include Radames (*Aida*) and Roméo (*Roméo et Juliette*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

Italian tenor **Walter Fraccaro** sings the role of Manrico for two performances on 2 and 7 May. He has previously sung the role for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, in Ancona and most recently Genoa. Recent roles include Mephistofele (*Faust*) in Palermo, Calaf (*Turandot*) in Venice and Cavaradossi (*Tosca*) in Zurich.

Singing Leonora for the first time at the Royal Opera House is American soprano **Sondra Radvanovsky**. She has previously sung the role in Paris, Chicago, for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Los Angeles, Berlin and Bilbao. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 2006 as Roxane (*Cyrano de Bergerac*), a role she also sang at the Metropolitan Opera, New York. She returned to The Royal Opera in 2007 to make her debut in the role of Lina (*Stiffelio*).

Returning to the role of Count di Luna, which he created in the original production, is Russian baritone **Dmitri Hvorostovsky**. He made his debut at Covent Garden in 1992 as Riccardo in *I puritani* and his other roles with the Company include Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*), Francesco (*I masnadieri*), Silvio (*Pagliacci*), the title role in *Rigoletto*, Renato (*Un ballo in maschera*) and the title role in *Eugene Onegin*. Recent roles include Renato (*Un ballo in maschera*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

Making his debut at the Royal Opera House is Russian bass **Mikhail Petrenko** singing the role of Ferrando. Recent roles include Hunding (*Die Walküre*) at the Salzburg Easter Festival, Pistola (*Falstaff*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Varlaam (*Boris Godunov*) in Berlin and Ramfis (*Aida*) at the Deutsche Staatsoper, Berlin.

Estonian mezzo-soprano **Monika-Evelin Liiv**, now on her second year of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, sings the role of Ines. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Flora (*La traviata*) in January 2008 and returned to sing Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) later in the Season. Her roles during 2008/9 include Second Maid (*Elektra*), Lady Artist (*Lulu*) and Flora (*La traviata*).

Former Jette Parker Young Artist Chinese tenor **Haoyin Xue** returns to sing Ruiz, the role in which he made his debut with The Royal Opera. Subsequent roles for the Company have included First Prisoner (*Fidelio*), Fourth Esquire (*Parsifal*) and Brighella (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) as well as the role of Beppe (*Rita*) in the Linbury Studio Theatre. He will also sing the role of Gastone de Letorières (*La traviata*) and First Noble (*Lobengrin*) for The Royal Opera this Season.

LOHENGRIN

Richard Wagner

27 April, 5, 8, 11, 14 May at 6pm / 3 May at 3pm / 16 May at 6pm

Elijah Moshinsky's 1977 production of *Lobengrin* returns to the Covent Garden stage. Designs are by **John Napier** and lighting by **Olivier Fenwick**. Movement is by **Eleanor Fazan**.

Semyon Bychkov, Chief Conductor of the WDR Symphony Orchestra in Cologne, conducts all performances. He made his debut with The Royal Opera conducting *Elektra* and *Boris Godunov* in 2003 and returned in 2006 to conduct *The Queen of Spades*.

South African tenor **Johan Botha** returns to sing the title role. He made his debut at Covent Garden in 1995 as Rodolfo (*La bohème*) and his roles for The Royal Opera have included Cavaradossi (*Tosca*), Emperor (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Apollo in concert performances of *Daphne* and most recently Radames (*Aida*) in 2003.

He shares the role with New Zealand tenor **Simon O'Neill** who makes his debut in the role singing two performances on 5 and 16 May. He made his debut at Covent Garden as Jeník (*The Bartered Bride*) in 2006 and also sang the role of Florestan (*Fidelio*) for The Royal Opera in 2007, returning to sing Siegmund (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*) later that year. He will sing Siegmund for Opera du Rhin in 2008 and also recently sang the title role of *Parsifal* in concert with the Santa Cecilia Orchestra in Rome

Having sung the role of Chrysothemis (*Elektra*) earlier in the Season, German soprano **Anne Schwanewilms** now returns to sing Elsa. She has previously sung the role for La Scala, Milan and recently sang the role in concert performances in Paris and Amsterdam. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 2004 singing the title role in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Recent roles include Madam Lidoine (*Les Dialogues des Carmélites*) in Hamburg, Elisabeth (*Tannhäuser*) in Berlin and Ariadne (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in Dresden.

Singing the role of Telramund is German bass-baritone **Falk Struckmann** who made his debut with The Royal Opera during the 2007/8 Season in the role of Amfortas (*Parsifal*). He has previously sung the role of Telramund in Vienna. Recent roles include Wotan/Wanderer (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*) at Bayreuth and Hamburg, Mathis (*Mathis der Maler*) in Hamburg, Jokanaan (*Salomé*) at La Scala, Milan, Amfortas (*Parsifal*) in Vienna and Hans Sachs (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) in Vienna.

German mezzo-soprano **Petra Lang** sings the role of Ortrud. She has recently sung the role in Oviedo and will also sing the role under the baton of Semyon Bychov with the WDR Köln in May 2008 and for the Grand Theatre Genf in Geneva. She has also sung the role in Vienna and in concert in Edinburgh. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Waltraute (*Götterdämmerung*) in concert in 1998 and also sang the Verdi

Requiem the following year. Her stage roles with The Royal Opera have included Brangäne (*Tristan und Isolde*), Prima Donna/Ariadne (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Judit (*Duke Bluebeard's Castle*) and most recently Kundry (*Parsifal*).

Singing the role of King Henry in his debut with The Royal Opera is Korean bass **Kwangchul Youn**. He has previously sung the role in Vienna in 2005 and will repeat the role there in May 2008. Recent roles include Ramfis (*Aida*) and Old Hebrew (*Samson et Dalila*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York. His roles for the Bayreuth Festival have included King Mark (*Tristan und Isolde*) and Titurel (*Parsifal*) and he will sing Gurnemanz (*Parsifal*) at the 2008 Festival.

Making his debut at the Royal Opera House in the role of Herald is Israeli baritone **Boaz Daniel**, currently a member of the Vienna State Opera. He has previously sung the role in Vienna where his roles have also included Kurwenal (*Tristan und Isolde*), Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*), Marcello (*La bohème*) and Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Recent roles include Posa (*Don Carlos*) in Tel Aviv and Ford (*Falstaff*) in Chicago.

Former Jette Parker Young Artist Chinese tenor **Haoyin Xue** returns to sing the role of First Noble. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House as Ruiz (*Il trovatore*) in 2006 and his roles for The Royal Opera have included First Prisoner (*Fidelio*), Fourth Esquire (*Parsifal*), Gastone de Letorières (*La traviata*) and Brighella (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) as well as the role of Beppe (*Rita*) in the Linbury Studio Theatre in 2007. He also sings the role of Gastone de Letorières (*La traviata*) for The Royal Opera later in the 2008/9 Season.

Jette Parker Young Artist Lithuanian bass-baritone **Kostas Smoriginas** sings the role of Third Noble. He made his stage debut with The Royal Opera January 2008 as Marquis D'Obigny (*La traviata*) and sings the role of Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season will include Mandarin (*Turandot*), Bello (*La fanciulla del West*), Schlemil (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) and Angelotti (*Tosca*).

Fourth Noble is sung by Jette Parker Young Artist South African bass **Vuyani Mlinde**. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Second Man in Armour (*Die Zauberflöte*) in 2008 and has also sung A Cappadocian (*Salome*) and Zaretsky (*Eugene Onegin*) for The Royal Opera and will sing the role of Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season include Orestes's Tutor (*Elektra*), Count Ceprano (*Rigoletto*) and Tom (*Un ballo in maschera*).

L'ELISIR D'AMORE

Gaetano Donizetti

12, 15, 18, 20, 25 May at 7.30pm / 23 May at 7pm

Co-production with Opéra National de Paris

Laurent Pelly's production of *L'elisir d'amore* returns for its first revival at Covent Garden. The production was first seen in Paris in 2006 and at the Royal Opera House in 2007. Set designs are by **Chantal Thomas** with costume designs by **Laurent Pelly** and **Donat Marchand** as associate costume designer. Lighting is by **Joël Adam**.

Richard Hickox, Music Director of Opera Australia, conducts his second opera of the Season, having conducted *The Beggar's Opera* earlier in the Linbury Studio Theatre. He has

also conducted *Paul Bunyan*, *Billy Budd*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Mitridate, re di Ponto*, *A Midsummer Marriage* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for The Royal Opera.

Singing the role of Nemorino is Italian tenor **Giuseppe Filianoti**. He has previously sung the role for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Vienna and Barcelona. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 2000 as Alfredo (*La traviata*), returning to sing the role again in 2001 and the title role in concert performances of *Dom Sébastien* in 2005. Recent roles include Hoffmann (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) in Hamburg, Tom (*The Rake's Progress*) in Palermo and Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

Having sung the role of Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*) earlier in the Season, German soprano **Diana Damrau** returns to sing Adina. She has previously sung the role of Adina in Frankfurt in 2001. She made her debut at Covent Garden in 2003 as Queen of the Night (*Die Zauberflöte*) and her roles for The Royal Opera have included Zerbinetta (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) and Fiakermilli (*Arabella*). Recent roles include her first Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York and Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Salzburg and Paris.

Sicilian bass-baritone **Simone Alaimo** returns to Covent Garden to sing Dulcamara. He has sung the role of numerous occasions, most recently in Barcelona in 2005. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House in 1988 as Mustafa in *L'italiana in Algeri* and subsequent roles include Don Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Faraone (*Mosè in Egitto*), Don Magnifico (*La Cenerentola*) and most recently the title role in *Don Pasquale*.

The role of Belcore is sung by British baritone **Anthony Michaels-Moore**, a role he has previously sung for The Royal Opera in 1992. He made his Royal Opera debut in 1987 as Nightwatchman (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*) and recent roles with the Company include Ezio (*Attila*), Scarpia (*Tosca*), the title role in *Macbeth*, Ford (*Falstaff*), Enrico (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*) and Count di Luna (*Il trovatore*). Recent roles include Captain Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York and Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) in Munich.

Jette Parker Young Artist Japanese soprano **Eri Nakamura** sings the role of Giannetta. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Fifth Maid in *Elektra* earlier in the Season. She also sang the role of Sandman and Echo (*Hänsel und Gretel*) and First Witch (*Dido and Aeneas*) for The Royal Opera. Her roles for the New National Theatre in Tokyo have included Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Marzelline (*Fidelio*) and Nanetta (*Falstaff*).

LULU

Alban Berg

4, 8, 10, 13, 17 June at 6.30pm / 20 June at 6pm

NEW PRODUCTION

Co-production with Teatro Real, Madrid

Christof Loy returns to direct a new production of *Lulu* for The Royal Opera. His previous productions for The Royal Opera include *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Designs are by **Herbert Muraier** with lighting by **Reinhard Traub**.

Music Director **Antonio Pappano**, now in his seventh Season with The Royal Opera, conducts his fourth production of the Season. He also conducts *Don Giovanni*,

La fanciulla del West, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *La traviata* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* as well as concert performances of Britten's *War Requiem* and Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* during the 2008/9 Season.

Swedish soprano **Agneta Eichenholz** will sing the title role, marking both her debut in the role and with The Royal Opera. Her recent roles include Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) in a new production by Christof Loy at Oper Frankfurt, Iphigenie in Handel's *Orest* in Berlin and Lucio Cinna (*Lucio Silla*) at Det Kongelige in Copenhagen.

American mezzo-soprano **Jennifer Larmore** makes her debut in the role of Countess Geschwitz. She made her Covent Garden debut as Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) in 1991 and her roles for The Royal Opera include Urbain (*Les Huguenots*) and Giulietta (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*). More recent roles include Elizabeth Griffiths (*An American Tragedy*) at the Metropolitan Opera, New York and she sings the role of Tigrana (*Edgar*) in concert at the Carnegie Hall and Fricka (*Das Rheingold*) with San Francisco Opera later in the 2008 Season.

German tenor **Klaus Florian Vogt** makes his debut with The Royal Opera singing Alwa. His recent roles include his debut at the Bayreuth Festival as Walther von Stolzing (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Andrej Chowansky (*Khovanshchina*) in Munich, his debut in Vienna as Erik (*Der fliegende Holländer*) and the title role in *Lohengrin* at La Scala, Milan and in concert in Paris and Amsterdam.

Singing the role of Dr Schön for the first time is German baritone **Michael Volle**. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House as Herald (*Lohengrin*) in 1997 and returned as Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in 2006 and Jokanaan (*Salome*) in February 2008. Recent roles include Beckmesser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), the title role in *Eugene Onegin*, Amfortas (*Parsifal*) and Kurwenal (*Tristan und Isolde*) for the Bayerischer Oper in Munich.

German tenor **Will Hartmann** sings the role of Painter/Negro which he has previously sung in Munich. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as a baritone in 1998 singing Da-Ud (*Die ägyptische Helena*) and went on to sing the title role in Harrison Birtwistle's opera *Gawain* in 2000. His more recent roles at Covent Garden include Macduff (*Macbeth*), Froh (*Das Rheingold*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Mark (*The Midsummer Marriage*) and Don José (*Carmen*) for one performance in April 2008. Recent roles include Max (*Der Freischütz*) for the Deutsche Opera in Berlin and Pelléas (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) in Munich.

Welsh bass **Gwynne Howell** also returns for his second role of the Season, singing Schigolch. He sang the role of Jack Wallace (*La fanciulla del West*) earlier in the Season. He made his Covent Garden debut in 1970 and his more recent roles for the Company include Gonzalo in the world premiere of *The Tempest*, Old Convict (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*), Simone (*Gianni Schicchi*) and Titirel (*Parsifal*).

The role of Rodrigo/Animal Trainer is sung by British bass **Peter Rose**. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1988 as Lord Rochefort (*Anna Bolena*) and his subsequent roles with the Company include Timur (*Turandot*), King Mark (*Tristan und Isolde*), Fasolt (*Das Rheingold*), Cadmus/Somnus (*Semele*) and Kecal (*The Bartered Bride*).

British mezzo-soprano **Heather Shipp** sings the roles of Gymnasiast/Dresser/Groom for the first time. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in the role of Wellgunde (*Das Rheingold*) in 2005 and subsequently sang the role in *Götterdämmerung*. She also sang Zaide (*Il turco in Italia*) with the Company.

Singing the roles of Prince Marquis/Manservant is British tenor **Philip Langridge**. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1983 as The Fisherman (*Le rossignol*). His subsequent appearances at Covent Garden have included the title roles in *Peter Grimes*, *Idomeneo* and *Palestrina*, Gustav von Aschenbach (*Death in Venice*), Loge (*Das Rheingold*), Don Basilio (*Le*

nozze di Figaro), Alonso, King of Naples (*The Tempest*) and most recently Hieres in the world premiere of Birtwistle's *The Minotaur*.

British mezzo-soprano **Frances McCafferty** sings the role of Mother, her third role of the Season. Her recent appearances with The Royal Opera include the Governess (*The Queen of Spades*), Yetta Zimmerman (*Sophie's Choice*), Xenia's Nurse (*Boris Godunov*) and Duenna (*Cyrano de Bergerac*). She appeared earlier in the Season as First Maid in *Elektra* and as Diana Trapes (*The Beggar's Opera*).

Company Principal bass **Jeremy White** sings the multiple roles of Theatre Manager/Banker/Professor of Medicine/Professor. His many roles for The Royal Opera include Truffaldino (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Betto di Signa (*Gianni Schicchi*), Kuligin (*Kat'a Kabanová*) and Snug (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). His roles during the 2008/9 Season include José Castro (*La fanciulla del West*), Benoit (*La bohème*), Old Servant (*Elektra*), Peachum (*The Beggar's Opera*) and Sacristan (*Tosca*).

Estonian mezzo-soprano **Monika-Evelin Liiv**, now on her second year of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, sings the role of Lady Artist. She made her debut with The Royal Opera as Flora (*La traviata*) which she will sing later in the Season. She also sang Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) in January 2008. Her roles during the 2008/9 Season include Second Maid (*Elektra*) and Ines (*Il trovatore*).

Jette Parker Young Artist Romanian soprano **Simona Mihai** sings the role of 15-year-old Girl. Recent roles include Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*) in Santiago, Roksana (*King Roger*) in Palermo and she will sing the role of La Virtù (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) for Glyndebourne in 2008. Her roles for The Royal Opera during the 2008/9 Season include Juliette (*Die tote Stadt*) and Dew Fairy and Echo (*Hänsel und Gretel*).

Lithuanian bass-baritone **Kostas Smoriginas**, a member of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, sings the role of Journalist. He made his stage debut at the Royal Opera House as Marquis d'Obigny (*La traviata*) in 2008 and he will also sing the role of Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season will include Mandarin (*Turandot*), Bello (*La fanciulla del West*), Schlemil (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) Third Noble (*Lohengrin*) and Angelotti (*Tosca*).

Jette Parker Young Artist South African bass **Vuyani Mlinde** sings the role of Manservant. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Second Man in Armour (*Die Zauberflöte*) in 2008 and has also sung the roles of A Cappadocian (*Salome*), Zaretsky (*Eugene Onegin*) for the Company and will sing the role of Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season include Orestes's Tutor (*Elektra*), Count Ceprano (*Rigoletto*), and Fourth Noble (*Lohengrin*).

The British premiere of the three act version of *Lulu* was given by The Royal Opera in a production by Götz Friedrich, with designs by Timothy O'Brien in 1981. It was conducted by Colin Davis, with Karan Armstrong in the title role. The production was last seen in 1983, again with Karan Armstrong as Lulu, Brigitte Fassbaender as Countess Geschwitz, Elizabeth Bainbridge as Mother, Gunter Reich as Dr Schön, Ryszard Karczykowski as Alwa and Robin Leggate as Painter.

LA TRAVIATA

Giuseppe Verdi

18, 22, 25, 30 June, 3, 6 July at 7pm / 27 June at 6.30pm

Production generously supported by Peter Borender (Director's Circle)

Richard Eyre returns to Covent Garden to direct this revival of his 1994 production of *La traviata*. Designs are by **Bob Crowley** with lighting by **Jean Kalman**. **Jane Gibson** is the director of movement.

Music Director **Antonio Pappano**, now in his seventh Season with The Royal Opera, conducts *La traviata* for the first time at Covent Garden. He also conducts *Don Giovanni*, *La fanciulla del West*, a new production of *Lulu*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* as well as concert performances of Britten's *War Requiem* and Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* during the 2008/9 Season.

American soprano **Renée Fleming** returns to Covent Garden to sing Violetta for the first time with The Royal Opera. She made her debut in the role for Houston Grand Opera in 2003 and has subsequently sung Violetta for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Los Angeles Opera and for the Lyric Opera, Chicago. In 1989 she made her Royal Opera debut as Dirce (*Médée*) and has subsequently returned to sing the Comtesse de Folleville (*Il viaggio a Reims*), Amelia (*Simon Boccanegra*), the Marschallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Desdemona (*Otello*), *Rusalka* in concert performances and title role of *Thaïs*, also in concert.

Returning to the role of Alfredo, which he first sang for The Royal Opera in 2003, is Maltese tenor **Joseph Calleja**. He made his Royal Opera debut as the Duke of Mantua (*Rigoletto*) in 2002 and returned to sing Alfredo (*La traviata*), Macduff (*Macbeth*) and most recently the role of Nicias in concert performances of *Thaïs*. He has also sung the role of Alfredo in Vienna and Chicago. Recent roles include the Duke of Mantua (*Rigoletto*) for Washington Opera and Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*) in Bari.

Returning for his second role of the Season is American baritone **Thomas Hampson** who sings the role of Giorgio Germont for the first time at Covent Garden. He first sang the role in Salzburg in 2005. He has also sung the role in Chicago and will sing it again in Zurich in May 2008. He sang the role of the German soldier in Britten's *War Requiem* earlier in the Season. His association with the Royal Opera House began in 1993 when he made his debut as Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), returning for Marcello (*La bohème*), Rodrigo (*Don Carlos*), Amfortas (*Parsifal*), Mandryka (*Arabella*), Renato (*Un ballo in maschera*) and most recently the title role in *Macbeth*.

Estonian mezzo-soprano **Monika-Evelin Liiv**, now on her second year of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, returns to the role of Flora in which she made her debut in 2008. She also sang Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) in the same Season. Her roles during the 2008/9 Season include Second Maid (*Elektra*), Ines (*Il trovatore*) and Lady Artist (*Lulu*).

Having sung the role in this production in 2005, 2006 and 2008, English baritone **Eddie Wade** once again sings the role of Baron Douphol. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1996 as Mandarin (*Turandot*) and has also sung the role of Indian (*The Bartered Bride*).

Senior Artist British bass **Robert Lloyd** sings the role of Doctor Grenvil which he first sang for The Royal Opera in 1977. He made his debut at Covent Garden in 1972 in *Khovanschina*. His recent roles with The Royal Opera include King Arkel (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), Don Fernando (*Fidelio*), Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*) and Palémon (*Thaïs*) in concert.

Jette Parker Young Artist Lithuanian bass-baritone **Kostas Smoriginas** returns to the role of Marquis D'Obigny in which he made his Royal Opera stage debut. He sings the role of Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season will include Bello (*La fanciulla del West*), Mandarin (*Turandot*), Schlemil (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) and Angelotti (*Tosca*).

Former Jette Parker Young Artist Chinese tenor **Haoyin Xue** returns to sing the role of Gastone de Letorières which he sang in 2008. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House as Ruiz (*Il trovatore*) in 2006 and his roles for The Royal Opera have included First Prisoner (*Fidelio*), Fourth Esquire (*Parsifal*) and Brighella (*Ariadne auf Naxos*). He also sang the role of Beppe (*Rita*) in the Linbury Studio Theatre in 2007.

The cast is completed by members of The Royal Opera Chorus: **Jonathan Coad** (Servant), **Neil Gillespie** (Giuseppe) and **Charbel Mattar** (Messenger).

UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

Giuseppe Verdi

26, 29 June, 2, 8, 17 July at 7pm / 5 July at 3pm, / 11 July at 12.30pm

Production generously supported by The Friends of Covent Garden

Mario Martone's production of the Boston setting of Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera*, which opened in April 2005, returns for its second revival, once again directed by Mario Martone. Sets for this production are by **Sergio Tramonti** with costume designs by **Bruno Schwengl** and lighting by **David Harvey**. Choreography and movement is by **Duncan Macfarland**.

Italian conductor **Maurizio Benini** returns to the Royal Opera House to conduct *Un ballo in maschera*. He has also conducted *Faust*, *Luisa Miller*, *Rigoletto*, *La sonnambula* and *La traviata* for The Royal Opera.

Mexican tenor **Ramón Vargas** will sing Riccardo. He has previously sung the role in Munich, Florence, Bologna, San Francisco and Houston. He made his Royal Opera debut in 1996 as Alfredo (*La traviata*) and returned to sing Rodolfo (*La bohème*) in February and May 2002 and the Duke of Mantua (*Rigoletto*) in the same year. Recent roles include the title role in *Faust*, Lensky (*Eugene Onegin*) and Rodolfo (*La bohème*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, and the title role in *Idomeneo* in Paris.

Spanish baritone **Carlos Alvarez** returns to Covent Garden to sing Renato. He previously sang the role for the Metropolitan Opera, New York in 2005. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*) in 1994, a role to which he returned in both 1995 and 1996. He most recently sang the title role in *Rigoletto* for The Royal Opera in 2002. Recent roles include Sulpice (*La Fille du régiment*) in Vienna, Rodrigo (*Don Carlo*) in Valencia and he will sing the title role of *Macbeth* at the Metropolitan Opera later in 2008.

Making her Royal Opera debut is Chilean soprano **Angela Marambio** who sings the role of Amelia, which she sings for the first time in June 2008 in Santiago. Recent roles include Amelia (*Simon Boccanegra*) for the Metropolitan Opera, New York in 2007 and Elisabetta (*Don Carlo*) in Berlin and Valencia.

Singing the role of Ulrica is Russian mezzo-soprano **Elena Manistina**. She has previously sung the role for Washington Opera. She made her operatic debut as Marfa in *Khovanshina* in Moscow and made her Royal Opera House debut as Sosostriis (*The Midsummer Marriage*) in 2005. Recent roles include Amneris (*Aida*) in Verona and Lyubasha (*The Tsar's Bride*) in Frankfurt.

Also making her debut with The Royal Opera in the role of Oscar is American soprano **Anna Christy**. She has previously sung the role for San Francisco Opera in 2006. She made her debut with the Metropolitan Opera, New York as Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*) in 2004 and her recent roles included her UK debut as Lucia (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) for English National Opera, Cunegonde (*Candide*) at La Scala, Milan and Constance (*Les Dialogues des Carmelites*) in Chicago.

Jette Parker Young Artist South African bass **Vuyani Mlinde** sings the role of Tom. He made his debut with The Royal Opera as Second Man in Armour (*Die Zauberflöte*) in 2008 and has also sung the roles of A Cappadocian (*Salome*), and Zaretsky (*Eugene Onegin*) for the Company and will sing the role of Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season include Orestes's Tutor (*Elektra*), Count Ceprano (*Rigoletto*) and Fourth Noble (*Lohengrin*).

Italian bass **Giovanni Battista Parodi** sings the role of Samuel, which he sang in this production in 2005. He made his Royal Opera House debut in 2001 as Monterone (*Rigoletto*), returning to the role in 2005.

Jette Parker Young Artist Korean baritone **Changhan Lim** sings the role of Silvano. He made his Royal Opera debut as Hermann (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) earlier in the season and also sings Marullo (*Rigoletto*) and Fiorello (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*).

The role of Minister for Justice is sung by British tenor **Martyn Hill**. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 2002 as Pong (*Turandot*) and his roles for Company have included Moser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Goro (*Madama Butterfly*), Dom Luis (*Dom Sébastien*) in concert and Second Jew (*Salome*). He will sing Spoletto (*Tosca*) later in the Season.

ROLANDO VILLAZÓN in recital

24 June 2009 at 7.30pm

Mexican tenor **Rolando Villazón** returns to the Royal Opera House in a recital performance accompanied by Music Director **Antonio Pappano**. Programme details to be announced at a later date.

IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

Gioachino Rossini

7, 10, 13, 15 July at 7.30pm / 4 July at 7pm / 18 July at 12.30pm (family performance)

Moshe Leiser and **Patrice Caurier**'s production of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, first seen in December 2005, returns to Covent Garden for its first revival. Set designs are by **Christian Fenouillat**, costume designs by **Agostino Cavalca** and lighting by **Christophe Forey**. The same team previously created two Rossini operas for Covent Garden: *La Cenerentola* in 2000 and *Il turco in Italia* in 2005. They also created *Madama Butterfly* and *Hamlet* in 2003 and directed the new production of *Hänsel und Gretel* for The Royal Opera earlier in the 2008/9 Season.

Music Director **Antonio Pappano**, now in his seventh Season with The Royal Opera, conducts *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. He has also conducted *Don Giovanni*, *La fanciulla del West*, a new production of *Lulu*, *La traviata* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* as well as concert performances of Britten's *War Requiem* and Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* during the 2008/9 Season.

Singing Figaro for the first time at Covent Garden is British baritone **Simon Keenlyside**. He has previously sung the role in Berlin, Vienna and Sydney. This is his third appearance of the Season, having sung the title role in *Don Giovanni* and the role of German soldier in Britten's *War Requiem* in Birmingham. He made his Royal Opera debut in 1989 as Silvio (*Pagliacci*) and his roles for the Company include the title roles in *Billy Budd* and *Hamlet*, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Valentin (*Faust*), Winston (1984), Prospero (*The Tempest*), Pelléas (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) and Oreste (*Iphigénie en Tauride*). He will sing the role of Rodrigo in a new production of *Don Carlo* for The Royal Opera in June 2008.

Returning to the role of Rosina which she created in the original production is American mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato**. She has previously sung the role at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Paris Opera, San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera, the New National Theatre in Tokyo and at the Rossini Festival in Pesaro. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 2003 as Fox in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Recent roles include the title role in *La Cenerentola* in Barcelona, Ariodante in Geneva and Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in San Francisco.

Peruvian tenor **Juan Diego Flórez** sings the role of Count Almaviva for the first time at Covent Garden. He has previously sung the role for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, in Vienna, Madrid, Pesaro, Bologna, Verona and Rome. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1997 as Potoski in a concert performance of Donizetti's *Elisabetta* at the Royal Festival Hall. Subsequent roles for The Royal Opera include Elvino (*La sonnambula*), Rodrigo (Rossini's *Otello*), Don Ramiro (*La Cenerentola*), Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*), Tonio (*La Fille du régiment*) and Corradino (*Matilde di Shabran*) earlier in the Season.

South African tenor **Colin Lee** will sing Count Almaviva for one performance on 13 July. He has previously sung the role for Welsh National Opera and English National Opera. He made his debut at the Royal Opera House in 2005 as Marzio (*Mitridate, re di Ponto*) and returned in 2007 to sing the role of Tonio (*La Fille du régiment*).

Singing the role of Doctor Bartolo for the first time with The Royal Opera is Italian baritone **Alessandro Corbelli**. He has previously sung the role in 2006 in Florence and will sing the role in Santiago later in 2008. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1988 as Taddeo (*L'italiana in Algeri*) and returned to the role in 1989 and 1993. Other roles at the Royal Opera House include Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Don Geronimo (*Il turco in Italia*), both Malatesta

and the title role in *Don Pasquale*, Dandini and Don Magnifico (*La Cenerentola*) and Sulpice (*La Fille du régiment*).

Italian bass **Ferruccio Furlanetto** sings the role of Don Basilio. He made his Royal Opera debut in 1995 as Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and his roles for the Company have included the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Count Walter (*Luisa Miller*), Padre Guardiano (*La forza del destino*), Philip II (*Don Carlos*) in the French version in 1998 and he sings the same role in the Italian version in June 2008 for The Royal Opera.

Welsh soprano **Jennifer Rhys-Davies** sings the role of Berta, the role in which she made her Royal Opera debut in 1993. Her other roles for the Company include Clorinda (*La Cenerentola*), Anna (*Nabucco*), Widow (*Babette's Feast*) and Mrs Julien (*Owen Wingrave*).

Jette Parker Young Artist Korean baritone **Changhan Lim** sings the role of Fiorello. He made his Royal Opera debut as Hermann (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) earlier in the Season and also sings Marullo (*Rigoletto*) and Silvano (*Un ballo in maschera*) during the 2008/9 Season. Recent roles include Monk (*Curlew River*) and Marcello (*La bohème*) in France.

TOSCA

Giacomo Puccini

9, 11, 14, 16, 18 July at 7.30pm

Production originally supported (2006) by Coutts & Co.

Jonathan Kent's production of *Tosca* was originally seen at the Royal Opera House in 2006 and has been revived in each subsequent Season. Designs are by **Paul Brown** with lighting by **Mark Henderson**. The revival director is **Stephen Barlow**.

Israeli conductor **Daniel Oren** returns to conduct this third revival of *Tosca*. He last conducted *Tosca* at the Royal Opera House in 1993. He has also conducted *La bohème*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Juive* in concert and *Rigoletto* for The Royal Opera.

Singing the title role for the first time at Covent Garden is American soprano **Deborah Voigt**. She made her debut in the role in 2001 with Florida Grand Opera and has also sung the role at the Metropolitan Opera, New York in 2004. She made her debut with The Royal Opera in 1995 as Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*) and has subsequently returned to sing Helena (*Die ägyptische Helena*) in concert performances in 1998 and Empress (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*) in 2001. She returns in June 2008 to sing the title role in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Recent roles include Isolde (*Tristan und Isolde*) and Sieglinde (*Die Walküre*) at the Metropolitan Opera.

Sicilian tenor **Marcello Giordani** returns to the Royal Opera House to sing Cavardossi. He has previously sung the role at the Torre del Lago Puccini Festival in 2007. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 1995 as Alfredo (*La traviata*) and sang the role of Adorno (*Simon Boccanegra*) in 1997 under Solti. He returned to The Royal Opera in 2004 to sing the role of Enzo Grimaldo (*La Gioconda*). Recent roles include Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) and the title role in *Ermani* at the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

Returning to Covent Garden for his second role of the Season, having earlier sung the title role in *Der fliegende Holländer*, is Welsh bass-baritone **Bryn Terfel** who sings Scarpia. He

created the role in the original production in 2006 and has also sung the role in Amsterdam. He made his debut at Covent Garden in 1992 as Masetto in *Don Giovanni*. Subsequent roles with The Royal Opera include Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Jokanaan (*Salome*), Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), the title roles in *Don Giovanni* and *Falstaff* and Méphistophélès (*Faust*). He has most recently been heard singing Wotan (*Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*), Scarpia (*Tosca*) and the title role in *Gianni Schicchi* for The Royal Opera.

Lithuanian bass-baritone **Kostas Smoriginas**, a member of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, sings the role of Angelotti. He made his stage debut at the Royal Opera House as Marquis d'Obigny (*La traviata*) in 2008 and he will also sing the role of Flemish Deputy (*Don Carlo*) in June 2008. His roles during the 2008/9 Season will include Mandarin (*Turandot*), Bello (*La fanciulla del West*) and Schlemil (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*).

Company Principal bass **Jeremy White** sings the role of Sacristan which he last sang for The Royal Opera in 2001. His many roles for the Company include Truffaldino (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Betto di Signa (*Gianni Schicchi*), Kuligin (*Kát'a Kabanová*) and Snug (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). His roles during the 2008/9 Season include José Castro (*La fanciulla del West*), Benoit (*La bobème*), Old Servant (*Elektra*) and Peachum (*The Beggar's Opera*).

The role of Spoleto is sung by British tenor **Martyn Hill**. He made his debut with The Royal Opera in 2002 as Pong (*Turandot*) and his roles for Company have included Moser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Goro (*Madama Butterfly*), Dom Luis (*Dom Sébastien*) in concert and Second Jew (*Salome*). He sang the role of Minister of Justice (*Un ballo in maschera*) earlier in the Season.

The Royal Opera Performance Dates - 2008/9 Season

DON GIOVANNI

8, 10, 12, 15, 18, 27, 30 September, 2
October at 7pm / 4 October at 12 noon
25 September at 11.30am (schools matinee)

LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

16, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29 September at 7pm

LA CALISTO

23, 25 September, 1, 3, 10 October at
7.30pm / 27 September at 12 noon

LA BOHÈME

11, 14, 16, 18 October at 7.30pm

MATILDE DI SHABRAN

23, 27, 31 October, 3, 6, 11 November at
6.30pm

ELEKTRA

8, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24 November at 7.30pm

WAR REQUIEM

9 November at 7.30pm – Royal Albert Hall
21 March at 7.30 pm – Birmingham
Symphony Hall

LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN

25, 28 November, 1, 4, 10 December at
6.30pm, 7 December at 3pm, 13 December
at 6pm

HÄNSEL UND GRETEL

Cast A - 9, 12, 16, 18, 21 December at
7.30pm, 14 December at 6pm, 29
December at 1pm
Cast B – 8 December at 1pm (schools
matinee), 11 December at 7.30pm, 14
December at 1.30pm (family performance),
28 December at 7pm, 30 December, 1
January at 6pm

TURANDOT

22, 29 December, 2, 5, 8, 12, 14, 17, 20, 23
January at 7.30pm, 27 December at 7pm

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

20, 22, 23, 27, 28 29, 30, 31 January at
7.30pm / 24, 25 January at 7pm

DIE TOTE STADT

27, 30 January, 2, 5, 11, 13, 17 February at
7.30pm

RIGOLETTO

10, 12, 16, 18, 25 February at 7.30pm, 14
February at 7pm, 1 March at 12.30pm
9 February at 12.30pm (schools matinee)

DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER

23, 26 February, 1, 4, 10 March at 7.30pm,
7 March at 12.30pm

I CAPULETI E I MONTECCHI

2, 5, 7, 30 March, 2, 7, 11 April at 7.30pm

MESSA DA REQUIEM

13 March at 7.30pm – Royal Opera House
20 March at 7.30 pm - Birmingham
Symphony Hall

DIDO AND AENEAS / ACIS AND GALATEA

31 March, 3, 8, 15, 20 April at 7.30pm, 11
April at 12.30pm, 18 April at 7pm

IL TROVATORE

13, 17, 21, 29 April, 2, 7 May at 7.30pm, 25
April at 7pm

LOHENGRIN

27 April, 5, 8, 11, 14 May at 6pm, 3 May at
3pm, 16 May at 5pm

L'ELISIR D'AMORE

12, 15, 18, 20, 25 May at 7.30pm, 23 May at
7pm

LULU

4, 8, 10, 13, 17 June at 6.30pm, 20 June at
6pm

LA TRAVIATA

19, 22, 25, 30 June, 3, 6 July at 7pm, 27 June
at 6.30pm

UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

26, 29 June, 2, 8, 17 July at 7pm, 5 July at
3pm, 11 July at 1pm

IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

7, 10, 13, 15 July at 7.30pm, 4 July at 7pm,
18 July at 12.30pm (family performance)

TOSCA

9, 11, 14, 16, 18 July at 7.30pm

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