

THE RICHARD B. FISHER CENTER
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AT BARD COLLEGE



Sergey Taneyev's

Oresteia

July 26 – August 4, 2013

About The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College

The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, an environment for world-class artistic presentation in the Hudson Valley, was designed by Frank Gehry and opened in 2003. Risk-taking performances and provocative programs take place in the 800-seat Sosnoff Theater, a proscenium-arch space, and in the 220-seat Theater Two, which features a flexible seating configuration. The Center is home to Bard College's Theater & Performance and Dance Programs, and host to two annual summer festivals: SummerScape, which offers opera, dance, theater, film, and cabaret; and the Bard Music Festival, which celebrates its 24th year in August with "Stravinsky and His World." The 2014 festival will be devoted to Franz Schubert.

The Center bears the name of the late Richard B. Fisher, the former chair of Bard College's Board of Trustees. This magnificent building is a tribute to his vision and leadership.

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The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College

Chair Jeanne Donovan Fisher

President Leon Botstein

presents

Oresteia

Music by Sergey Taneyev

Russian libretto adapted by A. A. Venkstern after Aeschylus

Directed by Thaddeus Strassberger

American Symphony Orchestra

Conducted by Leon Botstein, Music Director

Set Design by Madeleine Boyd

Costume Design by Mattie Ullrich

Lighting Design by JAX Messenger

Hair Design by Jon Carter

Makeup Design by Lucia Aloï

Sung in Russian, with English surtitles

Sosnoff Theater

July 26 and August 2 at 7 pm

July 28, 31, and August 4 at 3 pm

Running time for this performance is approximately three hours and 40 minutes, including two intermissions.

Special support for this program is provided by Emily H. Fisher and John Alexander.

Oresteia

Cast

Agamemnon, the King	Maxim Kuzmin-Karavaev
Clytemnestra, his wife	Liuba Sokolova
Aegisthus, his first cousin and Clytemnestra's lover	Andrey Borisenko
Orestes, son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra	Mikhail Vekua
Elektra, daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra	Olga Tolkmitt
Apollo Loxias	Andrey Borisenko
Cassandra, a Trojan princess	Maria Litke
Pallas Athena	Maria Litke
Watchman/Servant/Gatekeeper	Andrew Funk
First Areopagite	Michael Riley

Chorus

Soprano

Eileen Clark, Margaret Dudley, Maggie Finnegan, Jennifer Gliere, Laura Green, Sarah Hawkey, Marie Mascari, Caroline Miller, Jennifer Ribeiro, Amy Marie Rood, Martha Sullivan, Carla Wesby, Katherine Wessinger, Phyllis Whitehouse

Alto

Sarah Bleasdale, Miriam Chaudoir, Katharine Emory, B. J. Fredricks, Kirsten Kane, Helen Karloski, Mary Marathe, Martha Mechalakos, Guadalupe Peraza, Heather Petrie, AnnMarie Sandy, Suzanne Schwing, Irene Snyder, Abigail Wright

Tenor

Matthew Deming, Michael Denos, Sean Fallen, Ethan Fran, Alex Guerrero, Nicholas Houhoulis, John Cleveland Howell, Eric William Lamp, Mukund Marathe, Marc Molomot, Nathan Siler, Riley Soter, Michael Steinberger, Tommy Wazelle

Bass

Daniel Alexander, Paul An, Kelvin Chan, Samuel Hepler, Daniel Hoy, Steven Hrycelak, Juan Jose Ibarra, Enrico Lagasca, Andrew Martens, Thomas McCargar, Michael Riley, John Rose, Charles Sprawls, Aaron Theno

Chorus Master	James Bagwell
Choreographer	Marjorie Folkman
Music Preparation/Language Coach	Yelena Kurdina
Music Preparation/Language Coach	Liuba Orfenova
Assistant Director	Emily Cuk
Assistant Director/Translator	Roza Tulyaganova
Assistant Conductor	Geoffrey McDonald
Assistant Conductor	Zachary Schwartzman
Stage Manager	Lynn Krynicki
Assistant Stage Manager	Paul Sieveking
Assistant Stage Manager	Michelle Elias
Costume Supervisor	David Burke
Assistant Set Designer	Laura Morrison
Assistant Costume Designer	Antonia Ford Roberts
Assistant Lighting Designer	Tess James
Choral Contractor	Nancy Wertsch
Surtitle Creator	Danielle Sinclair
Surtitle Operator	John Kubiniec
Lighting Programmer	Victoria Loye

The producers wish to thank the TDF Costume Collection for its assistance in this production.

Synopsis

The action in *Oresteia* unfolds in three acts—Agamemnon, The Libation Bearers, and The Eumenides.

ACT 1

Agamemnon

The Watchman sees the fires announcing Agamemnon's homecoming from the Trojan War after 10 long years. Clytemnestra, Agamemnon's queen, informs the people that her husband returns victorious. But Aegisthus, the king's cousin, is troubled; he fears Agamemnon will uncover his affair with Clytemnestra and kill him. He tells how Atreus, Agamemnon's father, killed his nephews and fed their roasted flesh to their father, Thyestes, which brought down the curse of the gods on the House of Atreus. As the only surviving child of Thyestes, Aegisthus is duty-bound to slay Agamemnon to avenge the deaths of his siblings, but fears doing so and plans instead to flee. Clytemnestra convinces him otherwise, revealing her plan to kill the king to avenge the death of their daughter, Iphigenia, who was sacrificed by Agamemnon to guarantee a safe passage to Troy. She carries out her plan, murdering the king and his Trojan concubine, the princess Cassandra, who prophesies before her death that Orestes, son of Agamemnon, will return to avenge his father's murder and release the House of Atreus from its curse.

ACT 2

The Libation Bearers

Clytemnestra, unable to sleep, is frightened as she awakens from a nightmare in which Agamemnon's ghost appears to her and foretells her imminent death at the hands of Orestes. The latter returns and meets his sister, Elektra, as she and the libation bearers anoint Agamemnon's grave. Orestes affirms that Apollo has sent him to avenge the death of their father. Though horrified by the thought of committing matricide, Orestes discharges his duty, slaying both Clytemnestra and Aegisthus. For this action, the Furies—the spirits of retribution—begin to hound and pursue him.

ACT 3

The Eumenides

The relentless pursuit of the Furies nearly drives Orestes to suicide, but they will not let him die. In desperation, Orestes goes to Apollo's temple and asks the god for protection. Apollo dispels the Furies and sends Orestes to Athens, where Athena convenes a court to decide his fate. With the jurors voting equally for and against, Athena casts her deciding vote in Orestes' favor because he pursued the only honorable course of action and took full responsibility for it. The curse is lifted from Orestes and the House of Atreus, and Athena entrusts a new law to the Athenians—that of brotherly love and compassion.

From Tragedy to Opera

By choosing the *Oresteia* as a subject for an opera, Sergey Taneyev knew that he had his work cut out for him. Not only would he have to adapt Aeschylus' great trilogy as an opera libretto, but he would also have to make it understandable to his Russian audience, which had little knowledge of the Greek classics. Many changes in plot and characterization would be required. For example, Taneyev and his librettist Alexey Venkstern discarded the character of the Herald, who appeared in the original tragedy with the news of King Agamemnon's return; they replaced the chorus of the Elders with a chorus representing the people in general; and they added the chorus of Agamemnon's warriors and Aegisthus' bodyguards.

The central characters were modified in various ways as well. One of the most significant differences in the opera is the early appearance of Aegisthus, whose role was expanded and developed in order for him to narrate the story of the House of Atreus. The role of Clytemnestra is also different, as in the original she possesses masculine qualities and is compared to a strong animal. Agamemnon's imminent murder would have been in the minds of the Greek audience, and her chaste words about her faithfulness would thus provide the sense of duplicity and deceit that Aeschylus wanted to convey. But Taneyev and Venkstern counted on the Russian audience's lack of background knowledge to create a more dramatic impact with unexpected revelations of Clytemnestra's hidden agenda to murder Agamemnon, and her affair with Aegisthus. In Act 2, for example, Taneyev shows her altered emotional state by portraying her as dishevelled and terrified. Aeschylus' Clytemnestra, by contrast, is not weak and frightened; she does not regret killing her husband and displays no remorse.

Agamemnon's arrival is expected at the beginning of both the tragedy and the opera. In the latter, he arrives at Argos to the sounds of a celebratory march, a victor respectfully greeting his homeland. Taneyev's Agamemnon is the long-awaited king, glorified by the populace, who extol his achievements far beyond what was allowed for a mere mortal in Aeschylus' time. This official, regal presence, however, could not be more different from the personal traits ascribed to him that reveal him as a weak and vain man: Agamemnon may have conquered Troy, yet he is easily swayed by Clytemnestra's demands that ultimately lead to his death.

One of the composer's favorite characters was Cassandra. Taneyev's portrayal of her is varied and expressive, and her prophetic nature is inextricably linked to the tragic element in the opera. She divines the gruesome events of the past and foresees Clytemnestra's intention to kill Agamemnon almost immediately after her arrival in Argos. Aeschylus, too, laid great emphasis on Cassandra's prophetic visions, and presented her first and foremost as a seer, thus elevating her above ordinary human status. The Russian Cassandra ends her scene differently from her Aeschylean counterpart, who

decides that she has “had enough of life,” and makes a final speech about the fate of human beings, whom she pities: “I will go and meet my death now. I greet you, gates of hell!” “Gates of hell” can be seen as a reference to the palace’s entrance: Cassandra knows that an evil deed is taking place inside, and another will follow.

Taneyev’s Orestes appears alone, without his friend Pylades, who in Aeschylus’ original gives Orestes confidence and assurance. With Pylades gone, Orestes is forced to make his own decisions and thus becomes a stronger character, which heightens the drama. When the moment comes for him to break away from Clytemnestra and her powerfully persuasive speeches in order to kill her, he has to make the choice between two equally terrifying deeds without any emotional support. Though Taneyev’s Orestes stays close in character to his portrayal by Aeschylus, the composer adds a Christian dimension to the role; Orestes repents for what he did, suffers the consequences of his actions, and believes that his sufferings and repentance earn him the right to be forgiven. In contrast, Aeschylus’ Orestes is forgiven because matricide was considered a less serious crime than failure to avenge the father. Athena was biased in favor of the male.

A character significantly changed in Taneyev and Venkstern’s version is Apollo, who is presented in the opera as an absolutely pure and powerful god beyond reproach. Aeschylus’ Apollo does not behave like a god when he banishes the “courteous, calm, and logical” Furies from his temple, whereas in Taneyev he gracefully and authoritatively frees Orestes from the Furies’ intense persecution.

Aeschylus’ Furies are present on stage throughout the final part of the tragedy; Taneyev’s appear only in the first three scenes, and are not seen again after Apollo banishes them from his temple. An important difference is also their gender. In Aeschylus the Furies are all women; in Taneyev’s opera they are portrayed by a mixed chorus, which makes them appear considerably more powerful and threatening.

Aeschylus’ tragedy ends with the Furies housed in Athens. The terror they inspire serves as a reminder and an encouragement to the people to be just and to prevent crimes. Taneyev and Venkstern’s banishment of the Furies from the temple of Apollo and their disappearance from the opera allows for a revolutionized reading of the tragedy: Athena’s founding of law courts, which became widespread in the 19th century, replaces personal revenge.

—Anastasia Belina-Johnson, *Leeds College of Music, United Kingdom*

Ancient Greece: The View from Hyperborea

Some countries are blessed with a few Greek or Roman ruins, which fire up the national imagination. But the Russia of today is not among them. To the Greeks of antiquity, Russia was the mysterious Hyperborea, the land of the extreme north. The closest the Greeks came was Olbia and Chersonesus, whose remains lie on the southern shores of Ukraine. The Russian alphabet may remind a newcomer of the Greek, but the linguistic influence runs no further. In the absence of a substantial territorial or linguistic connection to ancient Greece, or indeed Rome, Russia's reception of antiquity was inevitably fitful, unstable, wishful, and fraught.

Russian ambassadors to the Vatican in the 16th century claimed to be scandalized by the nudity and paganism of the statuary on display. A century later, one Orthodox bishop refused a summons by Peter the Great until the tsar removed his own collection of such statues from view. But Peter was already decided: Greek antiquity was an essential part of his grand Westernizing project.

But it was not until the reign of Catherine the Great that the project flowered. Russian poetry, still in its infancy, was saturated in classical references to distance it sufficiently from the demotic tongue: everyone burned with Permessian flame that was quenched by Castalian dew. As in the rest of Europe, Italian opera placed classical mythology on the Russian stage, but the political context was unique: spurred on by Voltaire, Catherine planned to push back the Ottoman Empire so that Athens could flourish again under Russian protection. Hellenistic culture would combine with Russian military might.

One relic of Catherine's Greek project is the operatic extravaganza, *The Early Reign of Oleg* (*Nachal'noye upravleniye Olega*, 1790), whose libretto was written by the empress herself, and set to music by several court composers, both Russian and foreign. The opera's imposing finale was written in a supposedly ancient Greek manner, as Oleg, at the invitation of the defeated Byzantine Emperor Leon, watches Act III of Euripides' *Alcestis*. The task of creating suitably "Greek" music for the finale was entrusted to the Italian composer Giuseppe Sarti, who was supposedly capable of recovering the Greek modes and rhythms. His Russian colleagues were considered insufficiently learned.

Through most of the 19th century, Russian writers and composers were too preoccupied with nationalist projects to cultivate Hellenism (although some toyed with the implausible idea that the Greek modes could have served as a foundation for Russian folk song). Only toward the end of the century was there a return to Hellenism, inspired variously by French symbolist poetry, German archaeological discoveries, and Nietzsche's writings. In contrast to the age of Catherine, the new Hellenism owed nothing to the Imperial Court, and served as a modest countercurrent to the reactionary and chauvinistic rule of

Alexander III. The participating artists believed their world was in dire need of transformation (like their revolutionary contemporaries), but that this would somehow be delivered by art alone.

To this end was a new Russian attempt at the revival of Greek drama in all its trappings, including theatrical layout, sets inspired by images on Greek vases, experiments in declamation, the commentary of the Greek chorus, and dance sequences. Mikhail Gnesin provided the music for some of these productions, and he took a special interest in creating a declamatory style caught halfway between speech and song. Scriabin was so impressed that he decided to model the declamations of his *Mysterium* on Gnesin's.

Utopian theater dominated Russian artistic embodiments of antiquity during the Silver Age, but smaller-scale spin-offs are found in the salon song for voice and piano, which is suddenly invaded by melo-declamations and mythological themes. A prominent contributor here was Vladimir Rebikov, whose *Melomimics* and *Meloplastics* were all published with cover designs featuring elaborate Greek-inspired artwork.

At the crest of this Greek wave was the 1916 production of Taneyev's *Oresteia*. Cuts made in the first production, 20 years earlier, had left the composer dissatisfied, but now his opera flourished in a Russian theatrical world obsessed with Greek tragedy. Some, however, found the music insufficiently "Greek": they had become accustomed to the unusual meters and modes that served as local color in more recent music for Greek productions.

A decade later, and in a very different artistic environment, Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* looked back to the Greek projects of the Russian Silver Age, and for all its earnestness, there is sometimes a flicker of an ironic smile. Perhaps the glib narrator, who places the Greek tragedy into a modern frame, is Stravinsky's answer to the frequent tedium of early 20th-century Greek productions, which had been acknowledged even by the most enthusiastic supporters of the revival.

—Marina Frolova-Walker, *Reader in Music History, Faculty of Music, University of Cambridge, and Fellow, Clare College*

Sergey Taneyev: Biographical Note

Sergey Taneyev, who achieved prominence as a composer, conductor, pianist, and educator, was born into a wealthy and aristocratically connected family in Vladimir, Russia, on November 22, 1856. He began taking piano lessons at the age of 5, and at age 9 enrolled in the Moscow Conservatory, where Eduard Langer and Nikolay Rubinstein were his piano instructors. Beginning in 1871 he studied composition at the Conservatory with Pyotr Tchaikovsky, with whom he remained close after graduating with gold medals in piano and composition in 1875. In later years, Taneyev gave the premiere performances of several major works by Tchaikovsky; the older composer dedicated his orchestral fantasia *Francesca da Rimini*, Op. 32, to Taneyev, who reciprocated by dedicating his own String Quartet in B-flat Minor (1890) to him. Taneyev also wrote transcriptions of various pieces by Tchaikovsky, including the piano duet versions of the Symphony No. 4, Op. 36 (1877) and the ballet *The Nutcracker*, Op. 71 (1891–92).

After touring as a pianist for three years, Taneyev assumed, with some reluctance, a position at the Moscow Conservatory. He became its director in 1885, but resigned four years later, turning again to teaching in order to concentrate on composition. (Over the course of his pedagogical career, his pupils included Alexander Scriabin, Serge Rachmaninoff, Nikolai Medtner, and Reinhold Glière.) One immediate result of his resignation from the Conservatory was the time afforded to complete his most ambitious work: *Oresteia*, an opera based on the tragic trilogy of Aeschylus, which premiered at St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre in 1895.

Taneyev was a prolific composer, creating a wide array of orchestral, chamber, keyboard, and choral works. He also completed a number of works that were left unfinished by Tchaikovsky, and took a prominent role in founding the Tchaikovsky House-Museum at Klin in 1895 (his own manuscripts also reside in the Klin archive). He died on June 19, 1915, in Dyudkovo, shortly after contracting pneumonia after attending the funeral of his former student, Scriabin.

Who's Who



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Thaddeus Strassberger Director

Thaddeus Strassberger is an American director and scenic designer based in London. His career took off when he was awarded the prestigious European Opera Prize in 2005 for *La Cenerentola* (Opera Ireland/Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden). Recent productions include *Les Huguenots*, *Der ferne Klang*, and *Le roi malgré lui* (Bard SummerScape, Wexford Festival Opera); *Hamlet* and *Nabucco* (Washington National Opera/Minnesota Opera); *Le nozze di Figaro* and *The Rape of Lucretia* (Norwegian National Opera); and *I due Foscari*, with Plácido Domingo making his role debut (LA Opera/Palau de les Arts in Valencia). Upcoming debuts include Theater an der Wien in Vienna, Royal Opera House Covent Garden in London, Opera Philadelphia, Ekaterinburg State Opera in Russia, and Staatstheater Braunschweig in Germany. Strassberger earned a degree in engineering from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York City and received a Fulbright fellowship to complete the Corso di Specializzazione per Scenografi Realizzatori at Teatro alla Scala in Milan in 2001. For more information, visit www.tstrassberger.com.



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Leon Botstein Conductor

This season, Leon Botstein celebrates his 20th anniversary as music director and principal conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra. He is artistic codirector of the acclaimed SummerScape and Bard Music festivals, which take place at Bard College's Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, designed by Frank Gehry. Botstein is also conductor laureate of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, where he served as music director from 2003–11. He has been president of Bard College in New York since 1975.

Botstein has an active schedule as a guest conductor all over the world, and can be heard on numerous recordings, including operas by Strauss, Dukas, and Chausson, as well as works of Shostakovich, Dohnányi, Liszt, Bruckner, Bartók, Hartmann, Reger, Glière, Szymanowski, Brahms, Copland, Sessions, Perle, and Rands. Many of his live performances with the American Symphony Orchestra are now available for download on the Internet.

Leon Botstein is highly regarded as a music historian. He is the editor of *The Musical Quarterly* and the author of numerous articles and books. In 2011 he gave the prestigious Tanner Lectures in Berkeley, California. For his contributions to music he has received the

award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and Harvard University's prestigious Centennial Award, as well as the Cross of Honor, First Class, from the government of Austria. In 2009 he received Carnegie Foundation's Academic Leadership Award, and in 2011 was inducted into the American Philosophical Society. He is also the 2012 recipient of the Leonard Bernstein Award for the Elevation of Music in Society.

Andrey Borisenko Aegisthus/Apollo Loxias

A graduate of Moscow State University and Gnessin Russian Academy of Music, baritone Andrey Borisenko started his operatic career at the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre in Belarus, performing roles in the title role in Rachmaninoff's *Aleko*, as Rotny and Zaretsky in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, and as Figaro in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. He is currently a soloist at the Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Centre in Moscow. Borisenko's recent and upcoming engagements include Ezio in *Attila* (Teatro dell'Opera, Rome); Schelkalov in *Boris Godunov*; Gryaznoy in *The Tsar's Bride*; the title part in *Rigoletto*; several roles in Shostakovich's *The Nose* (Teatro dell'Opera); Scarpia in Puccini's *Tosca* (Baden Theater, Austria; and Japan); and Verdi's *Macbeth* (Magdeburg, Germany).

Andrew Funk Watchman/Servant/Gatekeeper

Possessing "a fresh, firm tone and good stage presence" (*L'opera*), bass Andrew Funk is generating excitement in opera houses and concerts halls throughout the country. He is a frequent guest artist with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, making his debut in the world premiere of the opera *Amistad* and since appearing as Pistola in *Falstaff*, One Armed Man in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, and in *La Gioconda*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Tosca*, *The Magic Flute*, *Salome*, and *Aida*, as well as covering Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Heinrich in *Lohengrin*, Osmin in *Abduction from the Seraglio*, and King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*. Up next, Funk performs King Marke with Florida Grand Opera and joins the Metropolitan Opera for its production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Maxim Kuzmin-Karavaev Agamemnon

A graduate of the Moscow Conservatory, Maxim Kuzmin-Karavaev continued his education at Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Centre. He has been a soloist at the Kolobov Novaya Opera Theatre of Moscow since 2007, and a regular guest soloist at Galina Vishnevskaya since 2006. His operatic repertoire includes Melisso in Handel's *Alcina*, Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Monterone in *Rigoletto*, Méphistophélès in *Faust*, and Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola*, among others. His international appearances include Figaro (Italy), Pimen in *Boris Godunov* (Budapest, Liège, and Debrecen), Calchas in *Iphigénie en Aulide* (Rome), Ser Amantio di Nicolao in *Gianni Schicchi* (Lyon), and Old Gypsy Man in Rachmaninoff's *Aleko* (Teatro Colón, Buenos Aires). Kuzmin-Karavaev has won honors at the International Glinka Singing Competition in Moscow (third prize, 2009), the International Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Singers Competition (2008), and the "Bella Voce" Young Opera Singers' Competition in Moscow (2002).

Maria Litke Cassandra/Pallas Athena

Maria Litke graduated from the Musical College attached to St. Petersburg State Conservatory in 2005. Since 2006, she has been a soloist at the Mikhailovsky Theatre in St. Petersburg and has performed Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Lisa in *The Queen of Spades*, the soprano part in Verdi's Requiem, Nedda in *Pagliacci*, Foreign Princess in *Rusalka*, Rachel in Halévy's *La Juive*, Amelia in *Un ballo in maschera*, and Mimi in *La bohème*. The government of St. Petersburg awarded her for achievements in arts and culture (2006), and she was a nominee for the "Golden Spotlight" award for her role as Foreign Princess in *Rusalka*. She is the laureate of a number of competitions, including first prizes at the 20th International Competition of Opera Singing "Iris Adami Corradetti" in Padova, Italy (2005), the Irina Bogacheva All-Russian Competition in St. Petersburg (2005), and the "Hopes, Talents, Masters" at the XIII International Youth Music Festival in Bulgaria (2008).

Liuba Sokolova Clytemnestra

Mezzo-soprano Liuba Sokolova was born in Chelyabinsk, Russia, and graduated from St. Petersburg State Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory, under the tutelage of Professor N. A. Serval, with postgraduate studies at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. A prize winner of the International Competition in Perm, she joined the Mariinsky Theatre in 1993, with which she has toured Germany, Finland (Savonlinna Opera Festival), Portugal, France, Spain, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Israel, Japan, Italy, and South America. Among Sokolova's acclaimed international engagements are Erda in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried* (Aalto Theater Essen), Ulrica Arfvidsson in *Un ballo in maschera* (Theater St. Gallen), Countess in *The Queen of Spades*, Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung* (Latvian National Opera, Riga), Countess in *The Queen of Spades* (Grand Théâtre de la Ville de Luxembourg), Larina in *Eugene Onegin* (Oper Leipzig), Amneris in *Aida* (Royal Albert Hall, London), and Yevpraksiya Romanovna in *The Enchantress* (Erfurt).

Olga Tolkmit Elektra

Since 2010 Olga Tolkmit has been a soloist at Mikhailovsky Theatre in St. Petersburg and has performed Gianetta in *L'elisir d'amore*, Mimi and Musetta in *La bohème*, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Iolanta and Brigitta in *Iolanta*, and Prilepa in *The Queen of Spades*. Other repertoire includes Liù in *Turandot* and roles in other Puccini operas (*Tosca*, *Lauretta*, *Manon Lescaut*, and *Cio-Cio San*); the title part in Dvořák's *Rusalka*; Leonora in *Il trovatore*; Olga in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Maid of Pskov*; Katerina in Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*; Serena in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*; Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*; Micaëla in *Carmen*; and Antonida in *The Life for the Tsar*. Tolkmit is the diploma winner of Elena Obraztsova VIII International Competition for Young Opera Singers and a nominee for The Golden Masque Award, Best Female Operatic Performance, for the role of Mimi in *La bohème* at Mikhailovsky Theatre.

Mikhail Vekua Orestes

Tenor Mikhail Vekua is a diploma recipient at the International Glinka Competition (2001) and the Grand-Prix and Republic of Kazakhstan Presidential Cup at the IV

Shabyt—2003 International Creative Youth Festival in Astana, Kazakhstan. A soloist at the Moscow Academic Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Music Theatre from 2002–11, Vekua gained international acclaim by jumping into one of the most difficult tenor parts—Alexey in Prokofiev’s *The Gambler*, at Liceu Barcelona. Other appearances include the role of Siegmund in a concert performance of *Die Walküre* (Kent Nagano, conductor) and Loge in *Das Rheingold* (Valeriy Gergiev, conductor). Recent and upcoming engagements include Radames in *Aida* (Mariinsky Theatre), Pollione in *Norma* (Dortmund), Andrey in *Mazeppa* (Heidelberg), Mime in *Das Rheingold* (Liceu, Barcelona), the tenor part in Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony (Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona I Nacional de Catalunya), Shabby Peasant in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and covering Yeroshka in *Prince Igor* (Metropolitan Opera).

Madeleine Boyd Set Designer

Madeleine Boyd graduated with a degree in theater design from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in 2001. Recent set and costume designs include *Don Giovanni* and *The Turn of the Screw* for Opera North, Leeds; *Amadigi di Gaula* for Central City Opera Festival, Colorado; *Le docteur miracle* and *Djamileh*, a Bizet double bill for the Royal College of Music, London; *La traviata* for Cape Town Opera; *Turandot* for Theatre Augsburg’s Open Air Arena, Germany; *La Cenerentola* for Malmö Opera, Sweden; and *Pélleas et Mélisande* for Independent Opera at the Lillian Bayliss Theatre, Sadler’s Wells, London, among others. Upcoming productions include *Così fan tutte* for Opera Touring Company, Dublin; and *Anna Bolena*, *Maria Stuarda*, and *Roberto Devereux* for Welsh National Opera, Cardiff. She was a finalist for the European Opera Directing Prize 2007 for her design concept for *Rusalka*, with director Alessandro Talevi, and was awarded a 2008 design fellowship from Independent Opera.

Mattie Ullrich Costume Designer

Mattie Ullrich’s recent costume designs for opera include *Eliogabalo* (Gotham Opera); *I due Foscari*, starring Plácido Domingo (Palau de les Arts Valencia, Spain, and LA Opera); *Nabucco* (Washington National Opera), *The Rape of Lucrezia* (Norwegian National Opera), and *Der ferne Klang* (Bard SummerScape). Off Broadway credits include *The Cradle and All* (Manhattan Theater Club), *Picked* (Vineyard Theater), *The Pride* (MCC Theater), *Fault Lines* (Naked Angels), *Things We Want* (The New Group), *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* (The Zipper), and *Bad Dates* (Playwrights Horizons). Ullrich has designed regionally for The Old Globe, Asolo Repertory, Cincinnati Playhouse in The Park, Goodspeed Musicals, Huntington Theatre Company, Dallas Theater Center, Delaware Theater Company, and New York Stage and Film. Her film projects include *Year of the Fish* (Sundance 2007), *Sovereignty* (multifestival award-winning short), and *Shoplifting Chanel*. In 2006, she was awarded the European Opera Prize for her collaboration with Thaddeus Strassberger.

JAX Messenger Lighting Designer

JAX Messenger maintains a successful career as a lighting professional. He has lit productions for such companies as Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo (*Laurencia*,

Walpurgisnacht, Majisimas); Merola Opera (*Barber of Seville*); Washington Ballet (*Sleeping Beauty, Fluctuating Hemlines, WAM2 [Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart]*, Shostakovich Concerto, *Don Quixote*); and San Francisco Opera (*Requiem, The Elixir of Love for Families*). He has recreated the designs of Tony Tucci, Mark McCullough, Nick Phillips, Kevin Meek, Nacho Duato, Jeff Bruckerhoff, and Jennifer Tipton. As an assistant lighting director he has managed the creation of four operas for New York City Opera and 48 operas for San Francisco Opera. As a lighting supervisor he has produced tours for Washington Ballet and Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo in hundreds of venues around the world, including The John F. Kennedy Center, Washington D.C., Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris; Teatro degli Arcimboldi, Milan; and Victorian Arts Center in Melbourne.

James Bagwell Chorus Master

James Bagwell maintains an active international schedule as a conductor of choral, operatic, and orchestral music. In 2009 he was appointed music director of The Collegiate Chorale and principal guest conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra, leading the ASO in concerts at Carnegie Hall in 2012–13. In July 2011 he prepared The Collegiate Chorale for three concerts at the Verbier Festival in Switzerland, and in 2012 they traveled to Israel and the Salzburg Festival for performances with The Israel Philharmonic. Bagwell has prepared The Concert Chorale of New York for many performances with the ASO, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Mostly Mozart Festival, all in Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center. Since 2003 he has been director of choruses for the Bard Music Festival, conducting and preparing choral works during the summer festival at the Fisher Center. Bagwell is professor of music at Bard College and codirector of the Graduate Program in Conducting.

Marjorie Folkman Choreographer

Marjorie Folkman has had the great pleasure of working with Thaddeus Strassberger on his productions *Les Huguenots*, *Der ferne Klang*, and *Le roi malgré lui* at Bard SummerScape. Other choreographic projects have included *Pigmalion* and *Les Indes galantes* (Boston Baroque), *Mephisto Project* (L'Opéra Français de New York), work with Bargemusic, and collaborations with poet Robert Kelly and new music ensemble Contemporaneous. Folkman danced as a member and principal performer with Mark Morris Dance Group (1996–2007); Martha Clarke (*Garden of Earthly Delights*); and in the companies of Sara Rudner, Amy Spencer/Richard Colton, and Merce Cunningham's Repertory Understudy Group. A summa cum laude graduate of Barnard College, she holds an M.A. in American history from Columbia University and is a Ph.D. candidate at the Bard Graduate Center, researching fin-de-siècle European material culture.

Yelena Kurdina Music Preparation/Language Coach

Yelena Kurdina—pianist, recitalist, coach, prompter, assistant conductor—is a much sought-after collaborator in the opera world. A specialist in Russian and Slavic repertoire at the Metropolitan Opera for almost 20 years, she was Plácido Domingo's private coach

for his preparation for “one of the most important roles of his career,” Ghermann in Tchaikovsky’s *Queen of Spades*. She was the coach and consultant for Renee Fleming’s recording of *Night Songs*, as well as Fleming’s televised appearance as Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin* with the New York Philharmonic on PBS’s *Great Performances*. Kurdina has assisted some extraordinary conductors—Seiji Ozawa, Vladimir Jurowski, James Conlon, and Valery Gergiev, among others—and worked with them on many Russian and Italian operas. Originally from St. Petersburg, Kurdina is a protégé of John Wustman, with whom she studied at the University of Illinois. She maintains a private studio in New York City, where she has coached many singers who have gone on to major operatic careers.

Liuba Orfenova Music Preparation/Language Coach

Liuba Orfenova worked as pianist and language coach at Opéra de Paris Bastille (*Boris Godunov*, *War and Peace*, *Khovanshchina*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*); Glyndebourne Festival (*The Queen of Spades*, *The Miserly Knight*, *The Duenna*, *Eugene Onegin*); Brussels (*Khovanshchina*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Eugene Onegin*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Boris Godunov*, *The Fiery Angel*); Toulouse (*Boris Godunov*); Bologna (*May Night*, *The Queen of Spades*); Bordeaux (*Eugene Onegin*); London Covent Garden (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Cherevichky*); Liceu Barcelona (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Boris Godunov*, *Khovanshchina*, *The Queen of Spades*, and *The Gambler*); Frankfurt (*The Queen of Spades*, *Tsar’s Bride*); Amsterdam (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Boris Godunov*, *Eugene Onegin*, and *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*); Madrid (*Boris Godunov* and *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*); Dresden (*Iolanta*); and Santiago de Chile (*Boris Godunov*). Recent and upcoming engagements include *Mazeppa* and *The Fiery Angel* (Komische Oper Berlin); *Boris Godunov* (Bavarian State Opera Munich); *The Legend of Kitezh* (Liceu Barcelona); and *Tcharodeyka* (Theater an der Wien).

Emily Cuk Assistant Director

Emily Cuk ’12 is currently working as a guest stage director for the undergraduate opera performance class at Bard College, where she will direct Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice* in the fall. She is also an administrative assistant for the Bard Music Festival and will stage manage the upcoming concert performances of Stravinsky’s *Oedipus Rex* and *Perséphone*. Her past projects as a director have included *Bats, Balls, and Badinage*, a collection of scenes from operas by Purcell, Mozart, Beethoven, and Puccini; *La Migraine*, an original pastiche consisting of art songs written by various composers from Schubert to Britten; and *When We Dead Awaken*, an opera by Jesse Brown. As an assistant director, she worked with Jay Lessenger in Manhattan School of Music’s production of *Ghosts of Versailles*. A recent graduate of Bard College, she studied music with an emphasis on opera production.

Roza Tulyaganova Assistant Director/Translator

Roza Tulyaganova is a native of Uzbekistan. Since moving to the United States, she has traveled extensively, performing major and supporting opera roles in cities across the country. In

addition to her singing career, she has worked frequently as a stage director, staging *Xerxes*, *Stone Guest*, and a program of “Opera Shorts.” She has also worked as a language coach for the Dicapo Opera Theater. Tulyaganova holds an M.M. degree from the Manhattan School of Music and a Ph.D. in musical arts from Stony Brook University. She taught and directed an undergraduate opera workshop course at Stony Brook University in New York.

Geoffrey McDonald Assistant Conductor

Geoffrey McDonald is the music director of the Bard College Orchestra and an instructor in Bard’s Graduate Conducting Program. He was recently appointed to the faculty of the Longy School of Music of Bard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he will lead the Longy Conservatory Orchestra, teach conducting, and coach chamber music. He has served as assistant conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra since 2009; was music director of the Philadelphia Young Artists Orchestra (2010–13) and Columbia University Bach Society (2009–12); and assistant conductor of the Gotham Opera and New Amsterdam Singers. McDonald received a master’s degree in conducting from Mannes School of Music and a bachelor’s degree in musicology from Princeton University. An eclectic performer and composer, he is a member of the Brooklyn-based indie-rock band Miracles of Modern Science, which has garnered national acclaim for its full-length debut album, *Dog Year*, and a recent EP, *MEEMS*.

Zachary Schwartzman Assistant Conductor

Zachary Schwartzman has conducted throughout the United States and in Mexico, Brazil, England, and Bosnia. His orchestral performances have been featured on NPR, including a national broadcast on *Performance Today*. In 2004, he received a career development grant from the Bruno Walter Memorial Foundation. He has served as assistant conductor for the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opera Atelier, Berkshire Opera, Opera Français de New York, L’Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Gotham Chamber Opera, and Oakland East Bay Symphony, among others. He has been assistant conductor for 15 productions at Glimmerglass Opera, where he conducted performances of *Carmen* and *A Blizzard on Marblehead Neck*. He was associate conductor for two seasons with New York City Opera, and a conductor in their VOX series. Schwartzman’s credits as assistant conductor include recordings for Albany Records, Naxos Records, and Chandos Records (a Grammy-nominated, world-premiere recording). He has been music director of Blue Hill Troupe since 2004.

Lynn Krynicki Stage Manager

Lynn is thrilled to be returning for her 10th consecutive season with Bard SummerScape as stage manager for the opera. She lives in Washington, D.C., where she has been on the stage management staff at the Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center for the past 13 seasons, working on operas such as *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Siegfried*, *Werther*, and *Anna Bolena*. Other notable stage management credits include the Latino Inaugural 2013 at the Kennedy Center; North American premiere of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* at Florentine Opera; *Carmen*, performed in Van Andel Arena for Opera Grand Rapids; and the world premiere of

Gabriel's Daughter at Central City Opera. Other companies she has worked for include Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Seattle Opera, and Milwaukee Ballet.

Paul Sieveking Assistant Stage Manager

Paul Sieveking returns for his second season with SummerScape. Previous engagements include productions with Washington National Opera; The Kennedy Center; Dallas Opera; Teatro Nacional de Sucre in Quito, Ecuador; Lyric Opera Kansas City; New Orleans Opera; Wolf Trap Opera Company; Kentucky Opera; and Opera Santa Barbara, among many others, as well as *Zumanity* for Cirque du Soleil in Las Vegas. Upcoming engagements include *Die tote Stadt* for Dallas Opera. Sieveking is a proud member of the American Guild of Musical Artists.

Michelle Elias Assistant Stage Manager

Michelle Elias is a freelance assistant stage manager who is currently working in opera. Professional regional credits include Virginia Opera, Opera Memphis, Opera North, Phoenix Theatre, and Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. A proud University of Michigan alum, she would like to thank her family, partner, friends, and Nancy for their unwavering support.

American Symphony Orchestra

Founded in 1962 by legendary conductor Leopold Stokowski, the American Symphony Orchestra (ASO) continues its mission to demystify orchestral music, and make it accessible and affordable to everyone. Under music director Leon Botstein, the ASO has pioneered what the *Wall Street Journal* called “a new concept in orchestras,” presenting concerts curated around various themes drawn from the visual arts, literature, politics, and history, and unearthing rarely performed masterworks for well-deserved revival. These concerts are performed in the Vanguard Series at Carnegie Hall.

The orchestra also performs in the celebrated concert series Classics Declassified at Peter Norton Symphony Space, and is the resident orchestra of The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College, where it appears in a winter subscription series as well as Bard's annual SummerScape Festival and the Bard Music Festival. In 2010, the American Symphony became the resident orchestra of The Collegiate Chorale, performing regularly in the Chorale's New York concert series. The orchestra has made several tours of Asia and Europe, and has performed in countless benefits for organizations including the Jerusalem Foundation and PBS. ASO's award-winning music education program, Music Notes, integrates symphonic music into core humanities classes in high schools across the tri-state area.

In addition to many albums released on the Telarc, New World, Bridge, Koch, and Vanguard labels, live performances by the American Symphony are now available for digital download. In many cases, these are the only existing recordings of some of the rare works that have been rediscovered in ASO performances.

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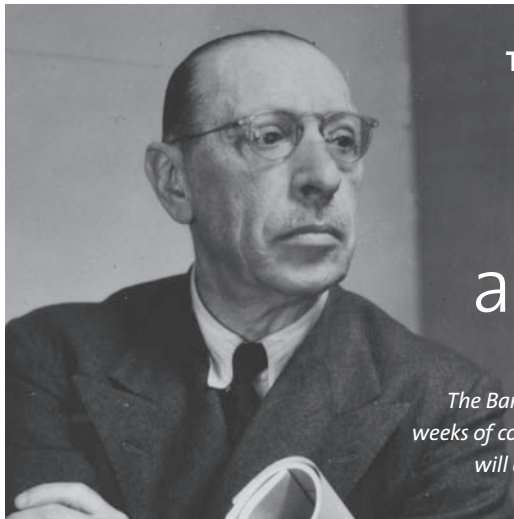
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