

2014-15 *Live in HD* Production Notes.

Giuseppe Verdi

Macbeth

Star soprano Anna Netrebko delivers her searing portrayal of Lady Macbeth, the mad and murderous mate of Željko Lučić's doomed Macbeth, for the first time at the Met. Adrian Noble's chilling production of Verdi's masterful adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy also stars Joseph Calleja as the noble Macduff and René Pape as Banquo. Fabio Luisi conducts.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Le Nozze di Figaro

(The Marriage of Figaro)

Met Music Director James Levine conducts a spirited new production of Mozart's masterpiece, directed by Richard Eyre, who sets the action of this classic domestic comedy in a 19th-century manor house in Seville, but during the gilded age of the late 1920s. Dashing bass-baritone Ildar Abdrazakov leads the cast in the title role of the clever servant, opposite Marlis Petersen as his bride, Susanna, Peter Mattei as the philandering Count they work for, Marina Poplavskaya as the long-suffering Countess, and Isabel Leonard as the libidinous pageboy Cherubino.

Georges Bizet

Carmen

Richard Eyre's mesmerizing production of Bizet's steamy melodrama returns with mezzo-soprano Anita Rachvelishvili singing her signature role of the ill-fated gypsy temptress. Aleksandrs Antonenko plays her desperate lover, the soldier Don José, and Ildar Abdrazakov is the swaggering bullfighter, Escamillo, who comes between them. Pablo Heras-Casado conducts the irresistible score, which features one beloved and instantly recognizable melody after another.

Gioacchino Rossini

Il Barbiere di Siviglia

(The Barber of Seville)

The Met's effervescent production of Rossini's classic comedy – featuring some of the most instantly recognizable melodies in all of opera – stars Isabel Leonard as the feisty Rosina,

Lawrence Brownlee as her conspiring flame, and Christopher Maltman as the endlessly resourceful and charming barber, himself. Michele Mariotti conducts the vivid and tuneful score.

Richard Wagner

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

James Levine returns to one of his signature Wagner works conducting this epic comedy—back at the Met for the first time in eight years—about a group of Renaissance “master singers” whose song contest unites a city. Johan Reuter, Johan Botha, and Annette Dasch lead the superb international cast in this charming and magisterial celebration of the power of music and art.

Franz Lehár

The Merry Widow

The great Renée Fleming stars as the beguiling femme fatale who captivates all Paris in Lehár’s enchanting operetta, seen in a new staging by Broadway virtuoso director and choreographer Susan Stroman (*The Producers, Oklahoma!, Contact*). Stroman and her design team of Julian Crouch (*Satyagraha, The Enchanted Island*) and costume designer William Ivey Long (*Cinderella, Grey Gardens, Hairspray*) have created an art-nouveau setting that climaxes with singing and dancing grisettes at the legendary Maxim’s. Nathan Gunn co-stars as Danilo and Kelli O’Hara is Valencienne. Andrew Davis conducts.

Jacques Offenbach

Les Contes d’Hoffmann

(The Tales of Hoffmann)

The magnetic tenor Vittorio Grigolo takes on the tortured poet and unwitting adventurer of the title of Offenbach’s operatic masterpiece, in the Met’s wild, kaleidoscopic production. Soprano Hibla Gerzmava faces the operatic hurdle of singing all three heroines—each an idealized embodiment of some aspect of Hoffmann’s desire. Thomas Hampson portrays the shadowy Four Villains, and Yves Abel conducts the sparkling score.

Peter Tchaikovsky

Iolanta

and

Bela Bartók

Bluebeard's Castle

On the heels of her triumphant Met performances in *Eugene Onegin*, soprano Anna Netrebko takes on another Tchaikovsky heroine in the first opera of this intriguing double bill, consisting of an enchanting fairy tale (*Iolanta*) followed by an erotic psychological thriller (*Duke Bluebeard's Castle*). Netrebko stars as the beautiful blind girl who experiences love for the first time in *Iolanta*, while Nadja Michael is the unwitting victim of the diabolical Bluebeard, played by Mikhail Petrenko. Both operas are directed by Mariusz Trelinski, who was inspired by classic noir films of the 1940s. *Iolanta* also stars Piotr Beczala, and Valery Gergiev conducts both operas.

Gioacchino Rossini

La Donna del Lago

Bel canto superstars Joyce DiDonato and Juan Diego Flórez join forces for this Rossini showcase of vocal virtuosity, set in the medieval Scottish highlands and based on a beloved novel by Sir Walter Scott. DiDonato is the “lady of the lake” of the title, and Flórez is the king who relentlessly pursues her, their vocal fireworks embellishing the romantic plot in this Met premiere production conducted by Michele Mariotti.

Pietro Mascagni

Cavalleria Rusticana

and

Ruggero Leoncavallo

Pagliacci

Opera's most enduring tragic double bill returns in an evocative new production from Sir David McVicar, who sets the action across two time periods but in the same Sicilian village. Marcelo Álvarez rises to the challenge of playing the dual tenor roles of Turiddu in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Canio in *Pagliacci*. Rae Smith (*War Horse*) has designed the moodily atmospheric 1900 village square setting of *Cavalleria*, which transforms to a 1948 truck stop for the doomed vaudeville troupe of *Pagliacci*. Eva-Maria Westbroek (*Cav*) and Patricia Racette (*Pag*) sing the unlucky heroines, and Met Principal Conductor Fabio Luisi is on the podium.