

ROYAL
BALLET &
OPERA

2024/25

Your programme today includes

A message from Alex Beard CBE, Chief Executive

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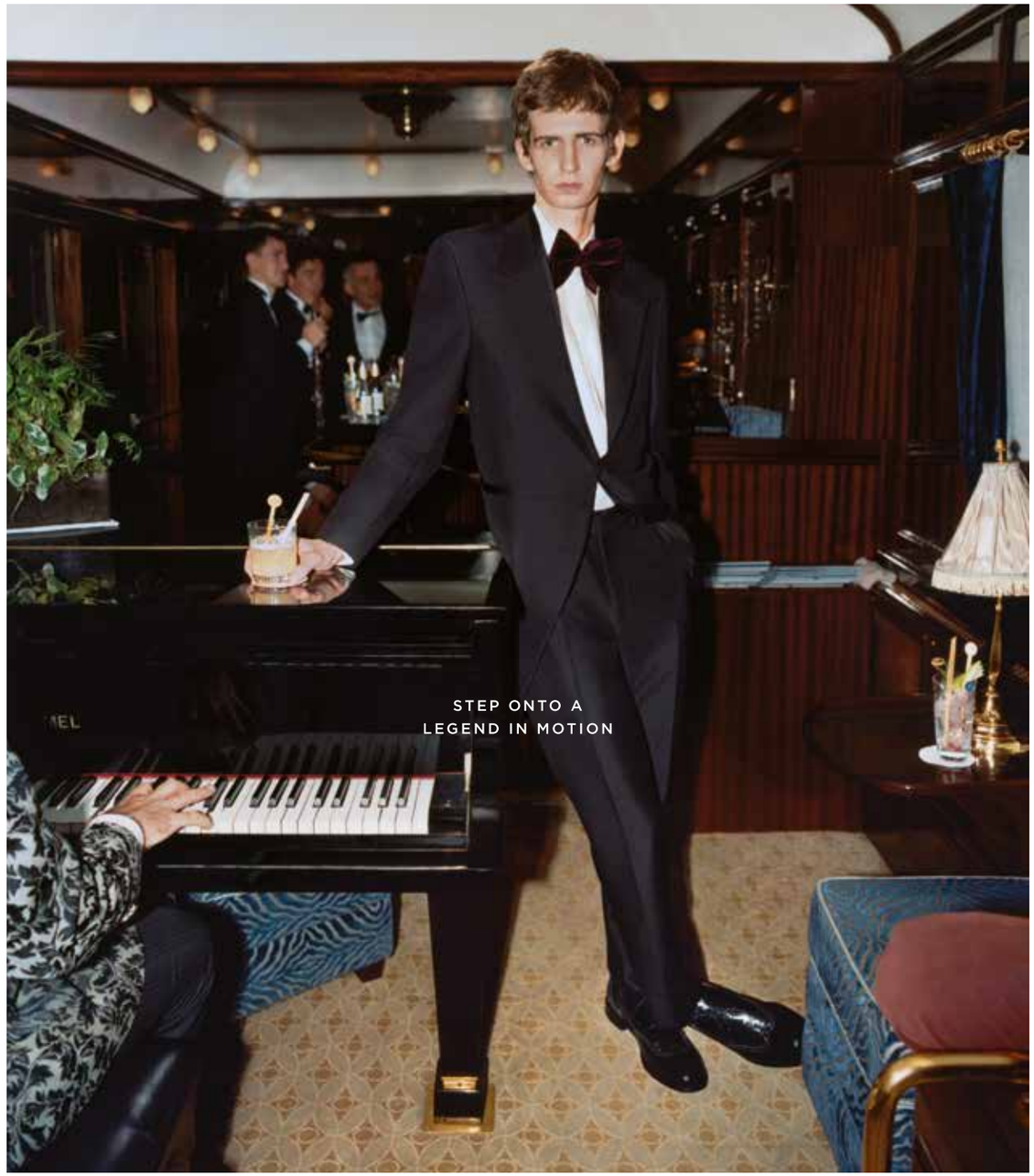
Information about today's performance.
Articles and illustrations: the story, the style, the history and the people who created them
Biographies of the production team and cast

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Alex Beard photographed by Helen Murray

Welcome to the Royal Ballet and Opera's 2024/25 Season.

Under a new organisation name, which finally celebrates ballet alongside opera after almost 80 years of performing together here, we present a packed programme of exciting new productions alongside cherished classics, thrilling debuts and bright new talent.

The ballet Season starts with two adaptations of Lewis Carroll's iconic story: Christopher Wheeldon's contemporary classic *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* returns to the Main Stage with a new generation of dancers taking on his brilliantly eclectic choreography; meanwhile ZooNation: The Kate Prince Company returns to the Linbury Theatre with *The Mad Hatter's Tea Party*, exploring mental health issues with unrivalled energy and ultimately redemptive joy.

November brings the highly anticipated European premiere of Sir Wayne McGregor's *MADDADDAM*, bringing Margaret Atwood's monumental trilogy of novels to life. In October, *Encounters: Four Contemporary Ballets* will feature the work of distinctive choreographers championed by The Royal Ballet: Kyle Abraham, Pam Tanowitz, Joseph Toonga and Crystal Pite.

In the Linbury, the Company continues its commitment to honing new and diverse talent. Royal Ballet Principal Joseph Sissens is the driving force behind *Legacy*, a celebration of Black and Brown dancers from all over the world, and the brilliant talents of Ballet Black return with a dynamic mixed programme, *Ballet Black: Heroes*.



BOODLES

A Family Story
Since 1798

The Spencer Twins wear *Over the Moon*

The Royal Opera Season sees Ted Huffman making his Main Stage debut directing a new staging of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, and Damiano Michieletto's new production of *The Tales of Hoffmann*. We also see a fantastic roster of artists interpreting a trio of classics, including Ying Fang's house debut as Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*; Aida Garifullina and Hrachuhí Bassénz in the title role of *La traviata* and Jennifer Davis taking the lead in the first revival of Tobias Kratzer's *Fidelio*, conducted by Alexander Soddy.

In the Linbury Theatre, Oliver Mears directs a new production of Bernstein's rarely performed operas *Trouble in Tahiti* and *A Quiet Place,* and in November, expect a radically different experience with *The Sound Voice Project*, a powerful 25-minute digital installation, where performers living with voice loss tell their stories, joining forces with opera singers and cutting-edge technology.

Looking ahead to the festive season, The Royal Ballet presents the glittering rags-to-riches tale *Cinderella* and The Royal Opera stages Antony McDonald's storybook production of *Hansel and Gretel*. Paris at Christmastime sets the scene for *La bohème*, with Speranza Scappucci, Principal Guest Conductor Designate, leading her first Covent Garden staged production. In the Linbury, Lost Dog offers an alternative Christmas show as *Ruination* returns, turning the classic Greek myth of Medea on its head.

And, complementing this array of unforgettable works, we continue our long-standing commitment to improving access to creative arts and education right across the UK, with our national schools' programmes, young talent opportunities and creative education courses pioneering the way to ensuring everyone has the chance to be creative, no matter where they are from.

This remarkable range of work is founded on the extraordinary efforts of so many at the Royal Ballet and Opera, and my sincerest thanks go to everyone on stage, backstage and front of house.

We are all also deeply grateful for the continued and remarkably generous support of our funders, philanthropists, Friends and Patrons, whose contributions make it all possible.

I hope you enjoy the performance.

Alex Beard, CEO
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The office of the Chief Executive is generously supported by Bob and Tamar Manoukian.



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This autumn, visit Piazza – our newest dining space, that offers modern British dishes, refreshed interiors, and a terrace with unrivalled, panoramic views of Covent Garden. Previously open exclusively to ticket holders, the restaurant is now open to all.

Overlooking what was once one of London's most famous food markets, Piazza presents a menu created by Executive Chef Colin Layfield, designed to connect with the heritage of the location. Most importantly, all our food has been sourced sustainably, supporting our commitment to minimising our impact on the environment, and to reaching net zero carbon emissions for Scopes 1 and 2 by 2035.

Bar snacks and starters use trims and offcuts to reduce waste, and the in-house butchery allows the kitchen team to feature lesser-known cuts of meat. Cooking oil is collected so it can be reused as fuel; coffee grounds are turned into logs and biofuels; and bespoke cocktails make use of seasonal produce that would otherwise be thrown away.

All ingredients used are sourced within a 40-mile radius of the Royal Opera House – helping us to reduce transport costs and showcase the very best of London's suppliers.

Fish comes from James Knight of Mayfair, who hold the Royal Warrant; smoked salmon comes from H. Forman & Son; and charcuterie comes from award-winning specialists Cobble Lane, who use traditional European methods to cure meat from British farms. Cheese comes from Paxton and Whitfield, London's oldest cheesemongers; and Ellis Wines, a 200-year-old family-owned wine business, supply Piazza's wines.

Take a seat in our fifth floor restaurant – adorned with sketches of opera and ballet costumes – or soak up the buzz of the capital and dine al fresco on our terrace. We're open every day from midday, providing the perfect lunchtime stop-off for small plates and a glass of wine, and the ideal evening destination for world-class cuisine. Book your table online now.

ROYAL BALLET & OPERA



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Come for the cocktails, *stay for the view*

Situated on the fifth floor at the Royal Opera House, Piazza is a stylish and welcoming restaurant space and terrace with fantastic views over Covent Garden. The seasonal, sustainably-sourced menus feature the finest, modern British cuisine.

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Helping our environment

The climate crisis is a critical issue for us all. We recognise our global reach and status in the arts sector, and embrace our responsibility to reduce our environmental impact. Our aim is to act as a catalyst for positive change in the industry by making regular progress towards our goals; to help us achieve this we follow the commitments of the Theatre Green Book and are delighted that we are now certified as achieving Basic Standard. This means we understand our impact on the environment and are committed to reducing it across all areas of our operations, buildings and productions. We are now beginning work to achieve Intermediate certification.

Last Season, we made progress with our energy management plans and are now laying the groundwork for decarbonising our historic Covent Garden home, to meet our target of net zero emissions for Scopes 1 and 2 (gas, electricity and fleet vehicles) by 2035. This will require significant planning and infrastructure work before we are ready to switch off our boilers, but this work is underway.

We continue to build on our successes and encourage our audiences to join us on this journey to becoming more sustainable. We have improved refuse and recycling signage and are gathering data to allow us greater insights into how our audiences travel to us. We also welcome you to join our Friends and Young RBO Sustainability Forum – a space to discuss our sustainability initiatives and share ideas.

Behind the scenes, our technical and production teams continue to collaborate with organisations, schools and charities to donate excess materials, and we have established a network to share our unwanted sets and props to give them a second life, freeing up space to store our new productions.

Our suppliers are vital in ensuring we can continue to perform world class opera and ballet in an historic location, and we cannot achieve our ambitions without their commitment. We have begun work to support them to reduce their impact on the environment and look forward to developing this community in the coming years.

We want to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to our audiences in continuing to work with us to achieve our goal of net zero by 2035.





WELCOME TO ANOTHER EXTRAORDINARY SEASON AT THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

A revered cultural landmark, Covent Garden, as it is popularly known, is London's beating heart of the performing arts. While the current theatre was built in the 19th century, the site has an operatic tradition of nearly 300 years. With around 500 annual performances of the highest standard, the Royal Ballet and Opera is known for its programme of beloved classics mixed with innovative new works. The majestic theatre's scarlet and gold auditorium is where great performers go to bare their souls and audiences bear witness.

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ROYAL BALLET & OPERA

ROLEX

ROYAL OPERA

Music Director Designate
JAKUB HRŮŠA
Director of Opera
OLIVER MEARS

Eugene Onegin

LYRIC SCENES

Music PYOTR IL'YICH TCHAIKOVSKY
Libretto PYOTR IL'YICH TCHAIKOVSKY and KONSTANTIN STEPANOVICH SHILOVSKY after the verse novel by Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Conductor HENRIK NÁNÁSI
Director TED HUFFMAN
Set Designer HYEMI SHIN
Costume Designer ASTRID KLEIN
Lighting Designer D.M. WOOD
Movement Director LUCY BURGE

ROYAL OPERA CHORUS
Chorus Director WILLIAM SPAULDING

ORCHESTRA OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE
Principal Guest Concert Master by arrangement with Trittico VASKO VASSILEV

24 · 26 · 30 September 2024
2 · 4 · 7 · 10 · 14 October 2024

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Welcome



Oliver Mears © Alun Callender

Along with *The Queen of Spades*, *Eugene Onegin* represents the peak of Tchaikovsky's operatic achievement. Despite the composer's episodic (and to purists of Russian literature like Nabokov, blasphemous) treatment of Pushkin's original source poem, Tchaikovsky discovered a vein of richly sensual romanticism and deeply felt emotion that continues to speak to our own experiences of infatuation, rejection and despair.

Making his long-anticipated Main Stage Royal Opera debut, Ted Huffman offers a distilled, charged approach to Tchaikovsky's drama, emphasising its poetic purity and theatrical dynamism. Henrik Nánási leads the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, the Royal Opera Chorus and an exciting young international cast including Gordon Bintner, Kristina Mkhitaryan, Liparit Avetisyan and Avery Amereau.

We would like to thank Royal Ballet and Opera Principals Julia and Hans Rausing for their exceptional philanthropic support, and the Fondation Socindec, Huo Family Foundation and Crevan O'Grady and Jane McClenahan for their generous philanthropic support.

Oliver Mears, Director of Opera*
Jakub Hrůša, Music Director Designate

*Position generously supported by Sir Mick and Lady Barbara Davis

Principal Partner, The Royal Opera

ROLEX

Cast

Eugene Onegin . . . . . GORDON BINTNER*

Tatyana . . . . . KRISTINA MKHITARYAN

Lensky . . . . . LIPARIT AVETISYAN

Olga . . . . . AVERY AMEREAU

Prince Gremin . . . . . DMITRY BELOSSELSKIY

Madame Larina . . . . . ALISON KETTLEWELL

Filipyevna . . . . . RHONDA BROWNE

Monsieur Triquet . . . . CHRISTOPHE MORTAGNE

Captain . . . . . SIPHE KWANI**

Zaretsky . . . . . JAMIE WOOLLARD**

Guillot . . . . . ALEX GOTCH

Peasant Singer . . . . . TIMOTHY PARKER-LANGSTON

Peasants, country people, guests at Tatyana's name day, guests at the ball in St Petersburg

*Role supported by Alan and Christine Jay
**Jette Parker Artist

Please refer to the digital cast sheet for
details of all actors, dancers, children and extra chorus

Production Credits

Music Preparation
SERGEY RYBIN, CHRISTOPHER WILLIS, RICHARD FU**

Assistant Directors
SIMON IORIO, ELEANOR BURKE

Language coach
LIUBA ORFENOVA

Fight Director
CARLOTTA DE GREGORI of RC-ANNIE LTD

Intimacy Director
YARIT DOR

Surtitle Translation
NATASHA WARD

Surtitler
KATY READER

Safeguarding Manager
GAYNOR EVANS

Children's Co-ordinator
NATALIE BARRON

Opera Stage Management
EMMA TURNER, SARAH WALING, ELLEN DAWSON, LUCY NEALE

Production Manager
IAN SMITH

Draughtsperson
LAURA FOY

Costume Production Manager
GIUSY COVIELLO

Assistant Costume Production Manager
ROSEMARY BURROWS

Costumes, hats, jewellery, painting, dyeing, wigs and footwear
ROYAL BALLET AND OPERA COSTUME AND WIGS PRODUCTION DEPARTMENTS

Additional Costumes
ANGELA SANTOS, KINGSLEY HALL, KATHY KINCEL, DAVID WOOD, LUCY ANDERSON, IAN COSTELLO, MADELEINE FRY, DASHA POMERANZA, FRANCIS CAMPBELL, CLAIRE EMERSON, DEBBIE JONKLER, KATHARINE ADENEY, TWAN LENTJES CREATIONS, BRISTOL CUT AND CONSTRUCT STUDIO (HEATHER BAGLEY), MCCANN BESPOKE (CLAUDIA BODEN)

Scenery building
ROYAL BALLET AND OPERA BOB AND TAMAR MANOUKIAN PRODUCTION WORKSHOP, THURROCK

Props
ROYAL BALLET AND OPERA PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT

**Jette Parker Artist

Synopsis

SCENE ONE: AUTUMN

In the garden of the Larin country estate, Tatyana and her sister Olga are singing an old love song to entertain themselves. Their mother Madame Larina reflects with the girls' nurse Filipyevna on the days before her marriage, when she was courted by her husband but loved another man. A group of neighbours arrives to celebrate the harvest with song and dance and to thank Madame Larina for her generosity. Tatyana daydreams: she wants to live like the heroines in the novels she reads. Olga teases her sister. They are interrupted when Vladimir Lensky, Olga's childhood friend and suitor, arrives at the estate and introduces his new neighbour Eugene Onegin. The four spend the afternoon strolling around the Larin estate. Tatyana falls deeply for Onegin.

SCENE TWO: THAT NIGHT

Unable to sleep, Tatyana asks Filipyevna about her own youth and early marriage. After Filipyevna goes to bed, Tatyana writes a letter to Onegin confessing her love for him. At dawn, she asks Filipyevna to arrange for the letter to be delivered to Onegin.

SCENE THREE: THE NEXT MORNING

Tatyana waits anxiously for Onegin. When he arrives, he tells her that he was touched by her letter, but that he would not be a good husband for her or anybody – although he does have feelings for her. Onegin warns Tatyana to be more cautious in the future, lest someone else take advantage of her open nature.

SCENE FOUR: WINTER

Madame Larina throws a party to celebrate Tatyana's name day. Onegin dances with Tatyana, but when he hears the neighbours gossiping about them, he dances with Olga instead. Monsieur Triquet, an elderly Frenchman, sings a song composed by Lensky for Tatyana. Lensky becomes jealous of Olga and Onegin. He confronts Olga who dismisses his anxiety and continues to flirt with Onegin. Lensky challenges Onegin to a duel.

INTERVAL

SCENE FIVE: EARLY THE NEXT MORNING

In a field near the Larin estate, Lensky waits for Onegin and reflects on the possibility of meeting an early death. Onegin arrives and both privately regret being in this circumstance. The men prepare their pistols. Lensky dies.

SCENE SIX: YEARS LATER

Fleeing the memory of Lensky's death, Onegin has travelled abroad for several years. On his return, he meets his relative Prince Gremin at a society ball in St. Petersburg. Gremin introduces Onegin to his wife: Tatyana. The unexpected meeting stirs up old feelings for both Onegin and Tatyana. Gremin describes to Onegin how happy Tatyana has made him. Alone, Onegin realises his terrible mistake in rejecting Tatyana and writes her a letter, declaring his love for her.

SCENE SEVEN: THE NEXT MORNING

Onegin, having no answer to his letter, arrives at the Gremin palace and begs Tatyana to run away with him. Tatyana admits that she still loves him, but that she has made her decision and will not leave her husband. Onegin is devastated.

– Ted Huffman



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Alexander Pushkin: A Poet's Life



6 JUNE 1799, MOSCOW

Alexander Pushkin is born into an aristocratic family. He is cared for by his grandmother and servants, including a beloved nurse, and tutored at home in the French language.

1811

Aged 11, Pushkin is sent to the Tsarskoye Selo Lycée near St Petersburg for his education. He spends six happy years there, and his poetry gains the attention of leading Russian literary figures.

1817–20

He graduates from the Lycée and joins the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a junior civil servant. While living a life of pleasure and dissipation, his poetry (at times risqué and political in nature) attracts the unfavourable attention of Emperor Alexander I.

1820

Pushkin's poem, the Russian-language mock epic, *Ruslan and Liudmila* is published to an enthusiastic reception. It is later adapted and turned into an opera by Mikhail Glinka (premiere: 1842). The Emperor loses patience with Pushkin's other subversive writings and dispatches the poet from St Petersburg. His travels take him to Kishinev, Odessa, the Caucasus and Crimea.

1824

Police intercept a letter from Pushkin to a friend in which he expresses admiration for atheism. The authorities exile him to his mother's country estate, Mikhailovskoye, in Western Russia, where he lives under police surveillance. He writes his play, *Boris Godunov* (later transformed into an opera by Modest Mussorgsky, prem: 1874), but it is censored.

1825–32

Pushkin's verse novel, *Eugene Onegin*, is published serially.

1825

Alexander I dies, and the Decembrists' revolt is brutally quashed by the new Emperor, Nicholas I.

1826

Nicholas I summons Pushkin to Moscow and grants him his freedom, but the poet continues to experience difficulties with censorship.

1827

Pushkin publishes his poem, *The Gypsies*, which is later turned into an opera, *Aleko*, by Rachmaninov (premiere: 1892).

1831

He marries Natalya Goncharova, 13 years his junior, and during their 5 years of marriage she bears them four children.

1833

He writes his prose novella, *The Queen of Spades* (later transformed into an opera by Tchaikovsky, prem: 1890), and the poem, *The Bronze Horseman*.

1834

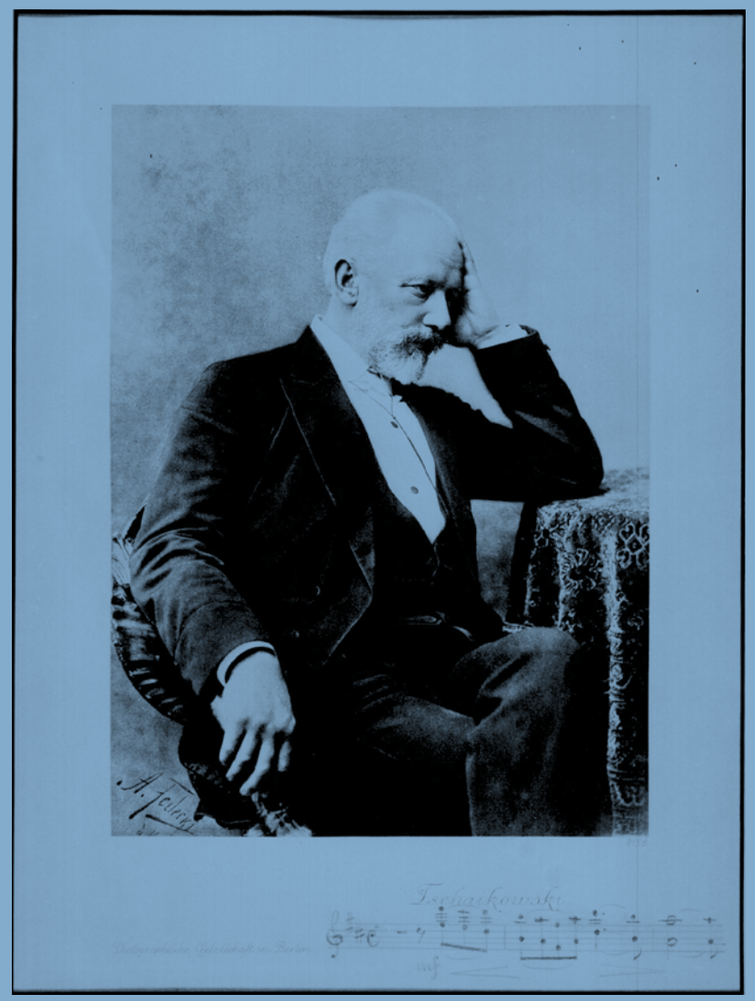
He writes *The Golden Cockerel*, a poem later turned into an opera by Rimsky-Korsakov (premiere: 1909).

1837

Pushkin is fatally wounded in a duel with a French officer in the St Petersburg Imperial Horse Guards. The altercation is sparked by the Frenchman's improper advances towards his wife, and insults to Pushkin's name. Two days later Pushkin dies of his wounds, aged 37. Fearing demonstrations, the authorities forbid a public funeral, and he is buried at the Svyatiye Gory monastery near Mikhailovskoye.

Portrait of Alexander Pushkin (c. 1827): oil on canvas by Orest Kiprensky

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky: A composer's life



1840

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, the son of a mining engineer, is born in Votkinsk, some 600 miles east of Moscow.

1845

Tchaikovsky starts to take piano lessons and progresses rapidly.

1850

He enters the St Petersburg Imperial School of Jurisprudence.

1855/56

He takes piano lessons with Rudolf Kündinger, and under the influence of voice teacher Luigi Piccioli, develops an interest in the operas of Bellini, Donizetti and Rossini, as well as Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.

1861

He enrols at the newly-opened St Petersburg Conservatory, and has numerous homosexual affairs, risking scandal.

1868

The composer's first symphony is performed in Moscow, conducted by Nikolay Rubinstein.

1869

The *Romeo and Juliet* Overture is the composer's first international success.

1875

In America, the pianist and influential figure Hans von Bülow performs the premiere of Tchaikovsky's first piano concerto: a testament to the composer's growing international reach.

1876

His ballet *Swan Lake* receives its premiere. He strikes up an epistolary correspondence with wealthy widow Nadezhda von Meck, who becomes Tchaikovsky's patron, enabling him to pursue composition full-time.

1877

Despite privately acknowledging his homosexuality, Tchaikovsky marries his former pupil, Antonina Milyukova. The union is doomed to unhappiness for both parties.

1878

The premiere of *Eugene Onegin* is given by students of the Maly Theatre, Moscow.

1879

Following the disintegration of his marriage, Tchaikovsky travels across Europe alone. While taking in the sights of Rome, he is inspired to write his orchestral piece, *Capriccio Italien*.

1890

Von Meck declares herself bankrupt, causing a rift with the composer.

1892

The Nutcracker ballet premieres, based on stories by E.T.A. Hoffmann. Gustav Mahler conducts *Eugene Onegin* in Hamburg, to great acclaim.

1893

The composer completes his final symphony, no. 6, the 'Pathétique', and dies nine days after its premiere, aged 53, in St Petersburg. Speculation abounds as to whether he died from deliberately drinking unboiled (and likely cholera-infected) water.

Portrait of Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), photographed by Alfred Fedecki

Production image ©2024 Sebastian Nevols

Spotlight: Gordon Bintner



The Canadian baritone on returning to Covent Garden, singing in Russian and preparing for the role of Eugene Onegin.

Q: What do you love about performing the role of Onegin? Do you have a favourite scene, or musical moment in the opera?

A: The music is of course utterly gorgeous and the role is a dream to sing, but it is performing the character that I love the most. If I had to choose, I'd say the final scene would be my favourite music to perform. The impassioned exchange with Tatyana is some of the most glorious music in the repertoire, but it's also a dramatic and vocal tour de force.

Q: Can you describe your first encounter with Tchaikovsky's opera, and its impact on you?

A: I first performed this role at the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto, back in 2018. It was a role unlike any I had ever tackled, and the character immediately piqued my interest. Exploring the vast range of emotions within Onegin, the tortured, jaded, and eventually lovesick rogue, gave me one of the most fulfilling and transformative experiences of my performing life.

Q: You've performed at the Royal Opera House in two previous productions (*Werther* and *Così fan tutte*). What is unique, or special, about performing in Covent Garden?

A: The Royal Opera House holds a very special place in my heart. The history that has unfolded in this iconic venue is at once staggering, humbling, and deeply inspiring. The Royal Opera House represents opera at the highest level, and it is a true honour to contribute in some way to the fabric of this storied institution.

Q: How have you prepared for performing this role?

A: The libretto gives us many clues, but the Pushkin poem offers a much deeper insight into the spirit, philosophy, and heart of the characters. I have read it a number of times, as it helps me to dig deeper into the depth and essence of this complex and multifaceted character. Understanding the relationships in all their dimensions helps to enrich my interpretation. I also work with a language coach, to be sure my pronunciation is as close to perfect as possible. During the rehearsal process, the diction coach can then fine-tune the execution. Finally, as for any role, I take it to my coaches and teachers, to really solidify my technique and musical interpretation.

Q: What are the highlights and challenges of singing in Russian?

A: Russian is a very friendly language to singers. Though very difficult to learn, once mastered, the language (particularly in Tchaikovsky's writing) lends itself to soaring and expansive lyricism. I am not a native Russian speaker, but I studied Russian in college, which gave me a basic foundation of the language structure, as well as a facility with Cyrillic, which has served me well.

Q: Anything else you'd like to tell us?

A: Just that I'm delighted to be bringing Onegin to London audiences, and I can't wait to sing on one my very favourite stages, here at the Royal Opera House, once again!

Gordon Bintner in rehearsal for *Eugene Onegin* ©2024 Ian Hippolyte

Ghosts of our youth



Ted Huffman on creating a new production of Eugene Onegin

Sophie Rashbrook

Earlier this year, the New York Times published a profile of American theatre directors making waves in Europe. The writer praised the New York-born Ted Huffman 'for his ability to coax psychologically complex performances from his actors in visually distinctive and uncluttered stagings'. In his much-anticipated production of *Eugene Onegin* for The Royal Opera, those trademarks – of a spare, vivid stage picture, populated by complex, multi-layered characters – look set to return. But it's an opera which, in its native Russia at least, has typically been associated with lavish, historically-informed productions in the style of grand opera. Ted argues that this may be the opposite of what Tchaikovsky originally intended for the piece: 'He did not want it performed – at least at first – at the opera house in St Petersburg. He insisted that it be performed by students at the Conservatoire. He felt that if it was done in the opera house first, it would basically be victim to the old-fashioned styles of presenting grand opera, which wasn't right for the piece.' It is well known that Tchaikovsky was nervous about doing justice to the Pushkin novel-in-verse; a hallowed literary icon in Russian culture. This veneration of the original text, Ted suggests, is what prompted the composer to take a radical approach. 'I think that's why he chose to structure the piece with scenes which are not necessarily fleshed out, but which take moments from the poem, and drop into them.'

Almost by default, the seven lyrical scenes that emerged are more economical, textually, than the Pushkin poem. The composer dispensed with Pushkin's author's wry, satirical commentary in favour of the earnest spoken words of the characters, with unusual results. 'I'm interested in how Tchaikovsky chose to jump into different moments in the story,' says Ted. 'They're what we would call "hard cuts" in film. And he jumps between times and places quite drastically.' Yet on a micro level, even within the scenes themselves, Ted argues that there is something quite radical and experimental going on: 'Tchaikovsky seemingly shifts perspective. He'll be in what you could call a "wide shot" where you're watching a whole community do a song and dance, and then he'll move in no time whatsoever to a two-person conversation. And he doesn't make the usual transitions that you would expect in those cases.' For Ted, this suggests a staging that resists a linear, or literal interpretation. 'It feels as if Tchaikovsky is looking for a form that doesn't resemble time in a realistic unfolding, but rather form that feels closer to memory, and how memories sit next to one another in our minds, even if they're memories across years. I think the structure of the opera offers a way of exploring this idea of regret and memory. It's about how our minds go over events and re-remember things, and un-remember things, and I love that about the piece.'

The theme of memory, and looking back on past events, is something of a theme in Huffman's work as a librettist, which he combines alongside directing. In 2025, Dutch National Opera will stage his next project, *We Are The Lucky Ones*: a multi-generational operatic portrait of a generation, based on interviews with Western Europeans born between 1940-49. His libretto for *Denis & Katya* (2019), a largely verbatim opera exploring the livestreamed suicide of a young Russian couple, deconstructed and dissected the online documenting of those real-life events. So what is it about the operatic art form that lends itself to this retrospective exploration of experience? 'I do think there is a strong

Portrait of Ted Huffman ©Lea Meienberg

It's about how our minds go over events and re-remember things, and un-remember things

relationship between music and memory,' he says. 'Music is a little bit like smell. We can be transported very easily by music, and so I think in that sense, it works really well with text that is about memory. I also think that theatre itself is oftentimes about memory and ghosts, and excavating our pasts. There's a reason why the repertoire keeps repeating itself.' With his background as a performer (Huffman grew up singing in church choirs and performing child roles on the Metropolitan Opera stage), he has an in-depth understanding of the opera canon, but also brings a performer's understanding of character psychology to his productions; something which will prove useful in *Onegin*.

The story focuses on the lives, loves and losses of four young people: sisters Tatyana and Olga, and friends Lensky and Onegin. For Ted, the sadness that permeates the piece speaks to broader questions about individual freedoms. 'I think this piece is about what happens when young people's feelings and romantic desires come into conflict with a society's expectations.' From the melancholy opening duet between Tatyana and Olga, to the chorus's folk song about an aborted courtship between a miller and his beloved, the signs are there, he argues, even before the main events of the opera take place: 'In the air, there is this sense that so much of a society is made up of figuring out rules, but we can also see how this has made so many people deeply unhappy, and that trying to follow these norms is not right for many of them.' In the spirit of the Pushkin and Tchaikovsky texts, this melancholy impulse has inspired Ted to re-examine the motivations of the characters – although he adds that he is not interested in imposing his own narrative on events: he is merely 'teasing out what's there in both texts'.

He is anxious to avoid the pitfalls of an overly sentimental, or literal approach. 'I do feel like in the past, too many productions follow the seriousness of the music in a way that actually undoes part of the joy, or the interesting elements of the text and the story. Pushkin has a more sardonic, whimsical storytelling mode, and I've drawn inspiration from that.' Working with designer Hyemi Shin and costume designer Astrid Klein, they have striven to create a visual world with a connection to the original historical setting, but which nevertheless retains an abstract quality. The idea behind this, Ted says, is to allow 'The events themselves [to be] looked at without too much specificity of a real world.' This is where the charm of the opera lies, for Ted. 'What's interesting about these operas that last is that they can exist in almost any time, any place. They get to emotional and psychological truths that resonate with us, and I think we don't need to see one exact period of history represented in order to get to those truths.'

What he hopes will emerge is a world which, in a sense, exists only in the audience's mind. 'I don't think of a stage as somewhere where we should represent fixed realities. For me, the best kind of stage is the one where the imagination is required in some way. In an ideal sense, it's a place where words, music and movement are used to invoke an audience's own imagination. I want the audience to see things which are not physically represented on the stage.' With Tchaikovsky's music to transport the audience into the unique emotional realm of Onegin's memories, it is sure to be a production that will live in the minds of the audience long after the curtain falls.

— Sophie Rashbrook works at the Royal Opera House as Engagement Content Producer for Opera and Music. Formerly Nicholas John Dramaturg at Welsh National Opera, she has written programme articles for Glyndebourne and Longborough Festival Opera, and regularly contributes programme notes for the Wigmore Hall and the Philharmonia Orchestra.



4.48 Psychosis, The Royal Opera ©2016 ROH. Photographed by Stephen Cummiskey



Nevsky Prospect, St Petersburg from *All the Russias: travels and studies in contemporary European Russia, Finland, Siberia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia* (1902) by Henry Norman

Remembrance of Things Past



Marina Frolova-Walker

Tchaikovsky's opera begins quietly, from a low plucked note. The plaintive violins enter with a simple figure of four notes that slips downwards and hesitates from time to time – this is music of sighs, gentle complaint, and nostalgia. There is also a hint of obsession: the four-note figure is repeated, with slight variations, over fifty times during the next few minutes. This is the voice of a narrator speaking to us with regret and resignation before he begins his story.

Tchaikovsky's subtitle tells us that opera is a sequence of 'lyrical scenes', as opposed to a complete story. In the Russia of the late nineteenth century, Tchaikovsky could assume that his audience would already be intimately familiar with the nation's greatest literary classic, Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. Outside of Russia, the Pushkin verse-novel is little more than a name in the literary pantheon, although the 1999 English-language film version, starring Ralph Fiennes and Liv Tyler, boosted public knowledge of the story.

The international audience, though, lacks this familiarity with the poem, and the gaps in the stage action will leave them wondering how things turned out at various points. How did Olga react to Lensky's death? – In the Pushkin, we are told that she didn't grieve for long and soon remarried. How was Onegin affected by the death of his friend in the duel? – The poem states that he fell into a depression but found distraction in travel abroad. Or, indeed, how did Tatyana regain her stability after she was rejected by Onegin? – As she found out more about him, she realised that he was not the aloof Byronic hero of her fevered imaginings, but only a parody of the type. Pushkin is witty and ironic, and in these unsentimental revelations he shares some of Onegin's cynicism. It is not clear how the poem's acerbic tone could have been conveyed in any opera, and in any case, Tchaikovsky's artistic strengths lay elsewhere: in anguished outpourings of emotion, and sweeping, swooning orchestration. He therefore leaves these, and other questions unanswered, preferring to focus on scenes united by the theme of dashed hopes, first for Tatyana, then Lensky, and finally for Onegin himself.

The tone of regret and nostalgia in the orchestral introduction also pervades the first scene: Tatyana and Olga sing a melancholy song of unrequited love; their mother reminisces about her youth, when she too was reading sentimental novels and sang sentimental songs; the Nanny adds reminiscences of her own in a more homely vein. As the scene progresses, we discover that the introduction was a portrait of Tatyana, and the plaintive melodic figure belongs to her. She is presented as pale, introverted, always with a book in her hand, and emotionally affected by the love stories she reads: 'Oh, how they suffer, how they suffer!' She seems to have set herself up for suffering and tears even before she meets her object of love. This flowed from the sentimental literary culture of the time, but where Tchaikovsky echoes and amplifies this Romantic sensibility in his music, Pushkin remains at an ironic distance in his verse, even though he can convey tragic events with great power.

Tchaikovsky's music also acts as a kind of omniscient narrator, painting Tatyana's first meeting with Onegin in fateful tones. The stage action is inconsequential, but the music is already full of foreboding. Onegin says, 'Delighted to meet you', but this formality is tinged by the melancholy of the orchestral introduction. After the first scene, and still before Tatyana has even begun to write her declaration of love for Onegin, the orchestral entr'acte already suggests a broken heart and flowing tears. The story Tchaikovsky presents is not a voyage of discovery, but an ineluctable descent into loss and defeat for all the main characters.

Lensky and Onegin often speak of happiness, but always in their recollections of the past. Lensky tells us about the Olga who brought him happiness in childhood, while the adult Olga brings him misery. Onegin confesses that he was once as romantic and optimistic as Tatyana, before he switched to ennui and cold resignation. Before the duel, both contenders think of their friendship over the years. They could be reconciled so easily, but instead, the duel and death is all that they can see

The death of the poet Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837), 1901 (oil on canvas), Ilya Repin ©Fine Art Images/Bridgeman Images

ahead. All three of the leading characters are captives of the literature they have imbibed: Tatyana of English and French sentimental novels, Lensky of German Romantic poetry, and Onegin of Byron's epics. This literature provides them with a default course of action. Lensky succumbs. Onegin thinks he has risen above it, but fails. It is Tatyana who breaks free from her literary type, although some might complain that she succeeds in this only by embracing the social role she was born into as a member of the Russian gentry.

Several years pass before Tatyana and Onegin meet again in Act III. Pushkin had created a symmetry between the two declarations of love. Onegin saw the young Tatyana as socially beneath him, while the older Tatyana is now socially above Onegin (through her marriage). Onegin's letter to Tatyana almost quotes her own letter back to her. Tchaikovsky likewise brings back some of the text and music from Act I but these references can be very subtle. Onegin signals the degree of his infatuation with Tatyana by singing "Let me perish!" These words were indeed sung by Tatyana in Act I (to the same music), but only while she was privately composing a draft of her letter that she tore up. The phrase was not in the letter that Onegin read. The implication is that even the youthful Tatyana was able to reject such overblown language, while the adult Onegin, after all his experiences, is still playacting, falling back on literary cliché. Perhaps it is impossible for him to find authentic language because the situation he has created is a product of the romantic imagination. But the symmetry has its limits. If Onegin had originally accepted Tatyana and married her, no harm would have been done by that. But Onegin is now wooing a married woman, enticing her to abscond with him, and for what? – A life abroad in exile, cut off from all friends and family, with no possibility of marriage and no assurance of constancy.

Anyone who has experienced rejection hopes to erase the humiliation. How satisfying it would be if the roles were reversed. Tatyana is given the chance to pay Onegin back, to deliver an icy response and take pleasure in seeing him squirm. She tries to do so, but her recollections of the past keep bringing unwanted emotions to the surface.

As their meeting approaches, the orchestra 'rehearses' lines from Tatyana's monologue: how she was younger, and better, and loved him, but found no response in his heart. In Tchaikovsky's stage directions for this final scene, we see Tatyana before Onegin's arrival, and her appearance is signalled by the return of her melancholy Act I music. Onegin catches her in this moment of vulnerability, when emotions from the past disturb her balance. But she wipes away her tears and says what she has decided to say, through music that is steadfast and at times even heroic. Onegin reverses a phrase from Tatyana's old love letter 'I am yours!' rendering it as 'you are mine!', which is quite a different thing, and his music is bombastic. In the first version of the opera to be performed, Tchaikovsky actually overturned Pushkin's ending, and had Tatyana fall into Onegin's embrace as the curtain fell. He thought better of this, and revised the scene to conform to the poem, but his own hesitancy over the ending fed into Tatyana's music. In the familiar version of the opera, Tatyana still seems to be losing her resolve, but she pulls back from the brink, and simply leaves the room, letting Onegin contemplate his failure, and the prospect of never seeing her again.

— Marina Frolova-Walker is a music scholar, critic and broadcaster, and is Professor of Music History at the University of Cambridge. Her books include *Russian Music and Nationalism from Glinka to Stalin* and *Stalin's Music Prize: Soviet Culture and Politics*. She is a regular contributor to BBC Radio 3 and a reviewer for *Gramophone* magazine.

Oh, how they suffer, how they suffer!

Onegin, Pushkin, Tchaikovsky:



Misremembered Histories

Gavin Plumley

When Alexander Pushkin published the instalments of his novel *Eugene Onegin* between 1825 and 1832, he provided a mirror image of Russian causes and concerns. The story appeared during the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, including victory over the French in 1812, and the failed uprising of the Decembrists in 1825. It was a turbulent time. Seeking to liberalise tsarist Russia, the reformers had hoped to end autocratic rule, establish a constitutional monarchy and emancipate the serfs. Pushkin's 'encyclopaedia of Russian life' wrestled with the politics of the period. But where his compatriot Tolstoy described the nation's shifting society in epic terms in *War and Peace* (1869), Pushkin wrote a performative, genre-bending verse novel, delivered with a sense of irony that was drawn from its protagonist.

Unlike the self-styled 'children of 1812' who formed the bedrock of the Decembrist movement – largely young, high-born Russians who had learned the moral worth of their peasant soldiers during battles such as Austerlitz and Borodino – Eugene Onegin represents a similarly key but contrasting personality in contemporary society and literature. A 'compendium of affectation', according to Pushkin, he is an example of the 'superfluous man', a dandy or aimless wanderer, as contemptuous in his affections as he is careless with his friendships. While Onegin may appear to be the self-satisfied Mr Darcy of Pushkin's plot – sadly, the author never knew Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) – he is much closer in spirit to the feckless Mr Wickham. Unprincipled, unpatriotic, Onegin stands apart from the lives he ruins, including that of the idealist Lensky.

Tatyana, on the other hand, is a thoroughly good person. Like Natasha in *War and Peace*, she moves deftly between country life and the social demands of the city. Passionate, unpretentious, Tatyana adapts to the fairground of high society, becoming almost unrecognisable to Onegin in the process, yet later recalls that she felt more at home, and was a 'better person', on the family estate. Chatting with her nurse, reading her novels, she embraces both a bucolic, folkloristic Russia and the elements of Western European culture that had begun to infiltrate. After all, Tatyana speaks and writes French more fluently than she does Russian – a mark of her class – including in her famous letter to Onegin. Pushkin's heroine is therefore a synthesis, the embodiment of a nation, while Onegin, despite affluence, adventure and intelligence, is a paper-thin follower of fashion.

Understandably, then, Tchaikovsky was more drawn to the novel's heroine when he adapted Pushkin's novel in 1877. The idea, which had come from Yelizaveta Lavrovskaya, a singer and professor at the Moscow Conservatory, initially left the composer unsure.

> But later, while eating alone in the pub, I remembered about *Onegin* and started thinking. I began to believe that Lavrovskaya's idea was possible and became captivated; by the end of my meal I had decided. I ran at once to track down a copy of the Pushkin, found the book with difficulty, went home, read the poem over again with rapture and passed a sleepless night, of which the result was a charming plot with words from Pushkin.

Reading and remembrance combined as Tchaikovsky began to fashion the libretto. With a little help from the writer and artist Konstantin Shilovsky, he transformed Pushkin's flowing if sardonic verse into seven operatic postcards – or what the composer termed 'lyric scenes'. Braver still was Tchaikovsky's decision to jettison Onegin's earlier exploits and concentrate instead on Tatyana's life. Overriding cynicism thereby shifted towards sincerity, with the heroine's worldview imbuing all, though the prevailing tone also derived from the composer's lived experience.

The work emerged in parallel with his strained courtship of former pupil Antonina Milyukova, whom he had met five years earlier. Although she was besotted, the homosexual Tchaikovsky was indifferent. He nonetheless saw an opportunity to quash the rumours circulating about his sexuality, and they married in July 1877.

Tchaikovsky's grave at the Alexander Nevsky cemetery, St Petersburg
©Images & Stories/Alamy Stock Photo

Throughout, however, his attention was fixed on the opera: 'I was completely buried in my composition', Tchaikovsky confessed, 'and had grown so close to the character of Tatyana that she and all around her started to seem real to me'. In the process, the composer cast himself as the heroine, employing a 'transposition technique' of swapped genders or sexualities that is familiar from other queer texts, including Proust's *À la Récherche du temps perdu*. Like Tatyana, his bookish and 'profoundly Russian' heroine, Tchaikovsky knew he would never find true love, though the outlook was similarly bleak for the hapless Antonina. By the end of 1877, their marriage was effectively over, and Tchaikovsky's uniquely intimate opera nearly finished.

Thanks to the emotional and, indeed, social intensity that each creator brought to their projects, Pushkin's novel and its operatic offshoot are very different beasts. While Tchaikovsky's 'set-piece' arias, delivered by Monsieur Triquet and even Prince Gremin, can appear rather arch, irony is not so much a matter of mood in the opera as a quality as a quality of the drama itself – and the title character's fall from grace. For even if the title of the book and the opera are the same, named after the 'half-awake, half-drowsing' figure who moves unthinkingly from 'ball to bed', the two works' sympathies are unalike. Where, in the original, Tatyana's rejection of Onegin is swift – and Pushkin's summary even swifter – Tchaikovsky cannot help but feel for his bruised baritone, just as he had for Tatyana.

Purists could balk at the composer's 'misremembering' of Onegin's undoing, yet Tatyana's regretful insights, coupled with the antihero's melancholy recollections of things past, would fall on very deaf ears if just deserts were taken as the moral of the story. Instead of the narrator's hasty 'goodbye', we witness a tragedy of missed opportunity and thwarted love, the themes to which Tchaikovsky was drawn throughout his career: from the suicide that concludes *Swan Lake* to the embittered Requiem of his 'Pathétique' Symphony.

Having died in 1837, Pushkin knew nothing of Tchaikovsky's adaptation of *Eugene Onegin*, nor indeed of the composer's subsequent responses to *Mazeppa* (1884) and *The Queen of Spades* (1890). The poet's celebrity was nonetheless assured. Even in Soviet times, Pushkin was hailed a 'semi-divine being'. The father of Russian literature, who had often derided the decadence of the West – despite his love of Shakespeare, Byron and the French language – Pushkin was even hailed as a proto-Communist by the writer Andrei Platonov. Tchaikovsky likewise continued to find favour after 1917, despite having written for the imperial theatres and undertaking extensive tours through Germany, Italy and Switzerland; 'though born Russians, we are at the same time even more Europeans', he said. Instead, the composer was held up as a model of popularity by the Party, quite unlike the exclusive 'formalism' they perceived among the avant garde.

Arguably, Pushkin and Tchaikovsky's reputations have rested on only half the story, not least in Russia. For it is impossible to embrace these unbridled talents, even to frame one as a cynic and the other as sincere, without diminishing the breadth of their work. Currently, Tchaikovsky's true nature is also subject to 'straightwashing', further threatening the impact of his music. By dismissing any reference to the composer's life as 'gay propaganda', the Putin regime has reduced his work in an already hostile arena. Their agenda not only denies the fact of Tchaikovsky's sexuality, but also how it underpinned the emotional acuity of his entire output, including his operatic masterpiece of 1877.

— Gavin Plumley is a cultural historian. As well as projects on Central European art and music, he has written, lectured and broadcast widely about Tchaikovsky's life and work, including for the Royal Opera House. Gavin's first book, *A Home for All Seasons*, is out now.



Duel scene from *Eugene Onegin* drawn by M. V. Dobwinsky ©Lebrecht Music Arts/Bridgeman Images

‘Give Way to my Secret Desire’



Finding Queerness in Eugene Onegin

Ben Miller

Someone – a teenager – stands alone in their dressing room, heart throbbing with the passion of a first-ever crush. It seems impossible to this teenager that they might ever be loved or understood. They struggle to write a letter to their crush. They sing of shame and loneliness, of fear and passion, in rote phrases learned from storybooks that nonetheless feel as real and individual as feelings can. Any queer, or otherwise othered, person knows this feeling – to be full of passion one can’t explain even to oneself, the depth of desire to divulge matched only by the fear of exposure and ridicule.

The relationship generating this passion is one of the two central relationships in *Eugene Onegin*, an opera with a deceptively simple plot. Speaking of the opera in 2016, the Berlin-based Australian opera director Barrie Kosky calls it ‘a piece about four young people. It’s about time and memory, love, loneliness, melancholy. But for me, one question is particularly important: what if?’ Tatyana asks: *what if* her impossibly handsome and worldly neighbour might share her secret passion? *What if* he might, after traveling the world and knowing its pleasures, fall for a lonely bookish girl who’s never felt she belongs anywhere? She searches her books, asking what if a kind of romantic and heroic life, a life she dreams of with an imagination unburdened by knowledge of adulthood, might sweep her out of reality? At the end of the opera, when Onegin unexpectedly meets Tatyana, who has transformed from provincial ingenue into a grand and sophisticated lady, he asks *what if* he had seen what she would become before it was too late? *What if* he had never fallen out with his friend Lensky? *What if* that relationship – ‘we shared everything, our meals, our thoughts, our leisure, as friends together,’ they sing – meant more than friendship? *What if* codes of masculinity and violence hadn’t turned their falling-out into a sudden, deadly duel? *What if* Lensky and Olga had, as planned, wed? Would they have been happy? *What if*? Tchaikovsky’s music, plaintive and devastatingly direct, fills in these what ifs with depths of feeling that transform these particular questions about these particular characters into universal meditations on longing, loss, and the possibilities that remain in the ruins of our choices.

Queerness exists in the space of what might be, in what might become. *Eugene Onegin* is an opera full of others and outsiders, of characters made strange by systems of sex and gender. What if is, itself, a queer question. José Esteban Muñoz writes: ‘We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality…Queerness exists for us as an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future.’ Despite its glimmers of queer possibility, the plot of the opera remains bound by heterosexuality, both in the forms of the couples it portrays and in its final foreclosure of the what if question through Tatyana’s rejection of Onegin and return to her marriage.

Nonetheless, what glimmers! Tchaikovsky assembled the text for his *Onegin* from fragments of the Pushkin verse-novel. Like all the truly great works of sung theatre based on truly great works of literature, this one takes sweeping liberties with the source text to introduce gaps that the music can fill, to make singing and music necessary. The selected fragments of Pushkin’s text represent Tchaikovsky’s

Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) in Tiflis, 1889 ©Heritage Image Partnership Ltd/Alamy Stock Photo

specific reading, a queer reading, of Pushkin's narrative. First among these is the Letter Scene, which begins with trembling strings and accelerating chord patterns as Tatyana is carried away by her crush. She sings of heterosexual desire, and yet Wayne Koestenbaum, in his 1993 manual of queer opera appreciation *The Queen's Throat*, lists this scene as one of the art form's queerest moments. 'Queerness isn't a private condition,' he writes. 'It occurs in public. Tatyana divulges, divulges, divulges.' She ends the letter with a sweeping, plaintive declaration that sounds like a coming-out story:

> So be it.
> I entrust my fate to you
> In tears before you,
> I beg for your protection.
> Imagine how alone I am
> Nobody understands me.
> Reason has abandoned me.
> I must perish in silence!

Then, she seals the letter in an envelope and sings of the hope its sending may bring, or perhaps its shame. As she sings of her shame, the melody sinks into a braying, almost growling chest voice, and finally, as Koestenbaum suggests, 'the orchestra keens some unnamed plight, maybe Tatyana/Tchaikovsky's revolt against the human condition or the gay condition or the condition of having a "condition."'

Tchaikovsky was acutely aware that he had a 'condition'. As he worked on *Eugene Onegin*, he fielded the possibility of marriage with Antonina Milyukova, a seamstress and former student at the Moscow Music Conservatory who had given up her studies due to lack of funds. Writing to his brother Modest in 1877, he likens Milyukova's early letters to that of Pushkin's heroine.

> In the second letter, she bitterly complained that she had not received a reply, adding that if the second letter met with the same fate as the first, the only course open to her was to take her own life. In my mind this all got associated with my conception of Tatyana, and it seemed to me as if I myself had behaved infinitely worse than Onegin.

The historian Rictor Norton writes that the composer's 'identification with Tatyana compelled him to agree to marry Milyukova, for fear of being as heartless as Onegin. Thus his identification with a female paradoxically made him temporarily reject his desires for a male, or, rather, his desire to be desired by a man like Onegin.'

Tchaikovsky's own letters reveal more than a hint of inner Tatyana. In January 1892, from Paris, he wrote to his nephew Bob, with whom he was hopelessly infatuated:

> I often think of you and see you in my dreams, usually looking sad and depressed. This has added a feeling of compassion to my love for you and makes me love you even more. Oh God! How I want to see you this very minute. Write me a letter from College during some boring lecture and send it to this address (14, Rue Richepanse). It will still reach me as I am staying here for nearly two weeks.
>
> I embrace you with mad tenderness.

In December of that year, writing from Berlin, he added 'If only I could give way to my secret desire, I would leave everything and go home.'

What if! Divulging! Yet Tchaikovsky's queerest and most Tatyana-like letter to Bob was sent in February of 1893:

> If you do not want to write, at least spit on a piece of paper, put it in an envelope, and send it to me. You are not taking any notice of me at all. God forgive you – all I wanted was a few words from you.

— Ben Miller is a writer and historian. He completed his PhD in Global Intellectual History at the Freie Universität Berlin. He is the author of *Bad Gays: A Homosexual History* (Verso, 2022) and writes regularly about classical music and opera for outlets including *The New York Times* and *VAN Magazine*.

Performance Note

The first performance of *Eugene Onegin* was given by students of the Moscow Conservatory in the Maliy Theatre on 29 March 1879, with Nikolay Rubinstein conducting; the production was directed by Ivan Samarin, with designs by Karl Waltz, who had also worked on part of Swan Lake. The cast included Maria Klimentova (Tatyana), Alexandra Levitskaya (Olga), Sergey Gilev (Eugene Onegin) and Mikhail Medvedev (Lensky). The professional premiere was at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, on 23 January 1881, with Enrico Bevignani conducting: the cast included Pavel Khokhlov as Onegin, for many years Tchaikovsky's most admired singer of the role.

The first Covent Garden performance was on 29 June 1906, in Italian, with Emmy Destinn, Louise Kirkby Lunn, Ivan Altchevsky and Mattia Battistini, conducted by Cleofonte Campanini. Following two further performances, the opera was not staged at Covent Garden until 1971.

The Royal Opera's first production of Eugene Onegin, by Peter Hall, with designs by Julia Trevelyan Oman, opened on 10 February 1971, with Ileana Cotrubaș (Tatyana), Robert Tear (Lensky) and Victor Braun (Eugene Onegin); the conductor was Georg Solti. The production was revived in 1972, 1974, 1975 and 1976. The cast for the 1976 revival included Kiri Te Kanawa (Tatyana), Benjamin Luxon (Eugene Onegin) and Stuart Burrows (Lensky). A further revival followed in 1979, the centenary year of the premiere, when *Eugene Onegin* was performed in Russian for the first time at the Royal Opera House. The cast included Gabriela Beňačková (Tatyana), Nicolai Gedda (Lensky) and Yuri Masurok (Eugene Onegin); Emil Tchakarov conducted.

Further revivals followed in 1980, 1982 and 1986. The production was last performed in March 1988, with Mirella Freni (Tatyana), Wolfgang Brendel (Eugene Onegin), Peter Dvorsky (Lensky) and Nicolai Ghiaurov (Prince Gremin), conducted by Mark Ermler. *Eugene Onegin* was also performed by the Kirov Opera, conducted and directed by Yuri Temirkanov, during the company's visit to the Royal Opera House in summer 1987.

A new production by John Cox, with designs by Timothy O'Brien, opened on 13 July 1993; the conductor was Valery Gergiev. The cast included Galina Gorchakova (Tatyana), Gegam Grigorian (Lensky) and Sergei Leiferkus (Eugene Onegin). For the revival in October 1993, Mark Ermler conducted a cast that included the late Dmitri Hvorostovsky (Eugene Onegin), Catherine Malfitano (Tatyana) and Giuseppe Sabbatini (Lensky).

A new co-production with Finnish National Opera by the late Steven Pimlott, with designs by Antony McDonald, lighting by Peter Mumford and choreography by the late Linda Dobell, opened at the Royal Opera House on 16 March 2006. Philippe Jordan conducted a cast including Amanda Roocroft (Tatyana), Dmitri Hvorostovsky (Onegin), Rolando Villazón (Lensky, replaced for two performances by Nikola Matišić) and Nino Surguladze (Olga). The production was revived in 2008, conducted by Jiří Bělohlávek and Christopher Willis. The cast included Hibla Gerzmava/Marina Poplavskaya (Tatyana), Gerald Finley (Onegin; replaced for one performance by Mark Stone and for another by Andrew Schroeder), Ekaterina Semenchuk (Olga) and Piotr Beczala (Lensky). The Bolshoi Opera gave four performances of a production by Dmitri Tcherniakov at Covent Garden in August 2010.

The previous production, directed by Kasper Holten, was a co-production with Opera Australia and the Teatro Regio, Turin. It was conducted by Robin Ticciati and opened at the Royal Opera House on 4 February 2013, with a cast including Simon Keenlyside (Onegin), Krassimira Stoyanova (Tatyana), Pavol Breslik (Lensky), Elena Maximova (Olga) and Peter Rose (Prince Gremin). It was revived in 2015, starring Dmitri Hvorostovsky and Artur Ruciński as Onegin, Nicole Car as Tatyana, Oksana Volkova as Olga, Michael Fabiano as Lensky, and Ferruccio Furlanetto and James Platt as Prince Gremin, with Semyon Bychkov conducting.



Patricia Payne as Filipyevna, Kiri Te Kanawa as Tatyana and Heather Begg as Madame Larina in *Eugene Onegin* (1971), photographed by Donald Southern ©ROH Collections



Gordon Bintner and Kristina Mkhitaryan in rehearsal for *Eugene Onegin* ©2024 Ian Hippolyte







Top: Kristina Mkhitaryan, bottom: Kristina Mkhitaryan and Avery Amereau in rehearsal for *Eugene Onegin* ©2024 Ian Hippolyte



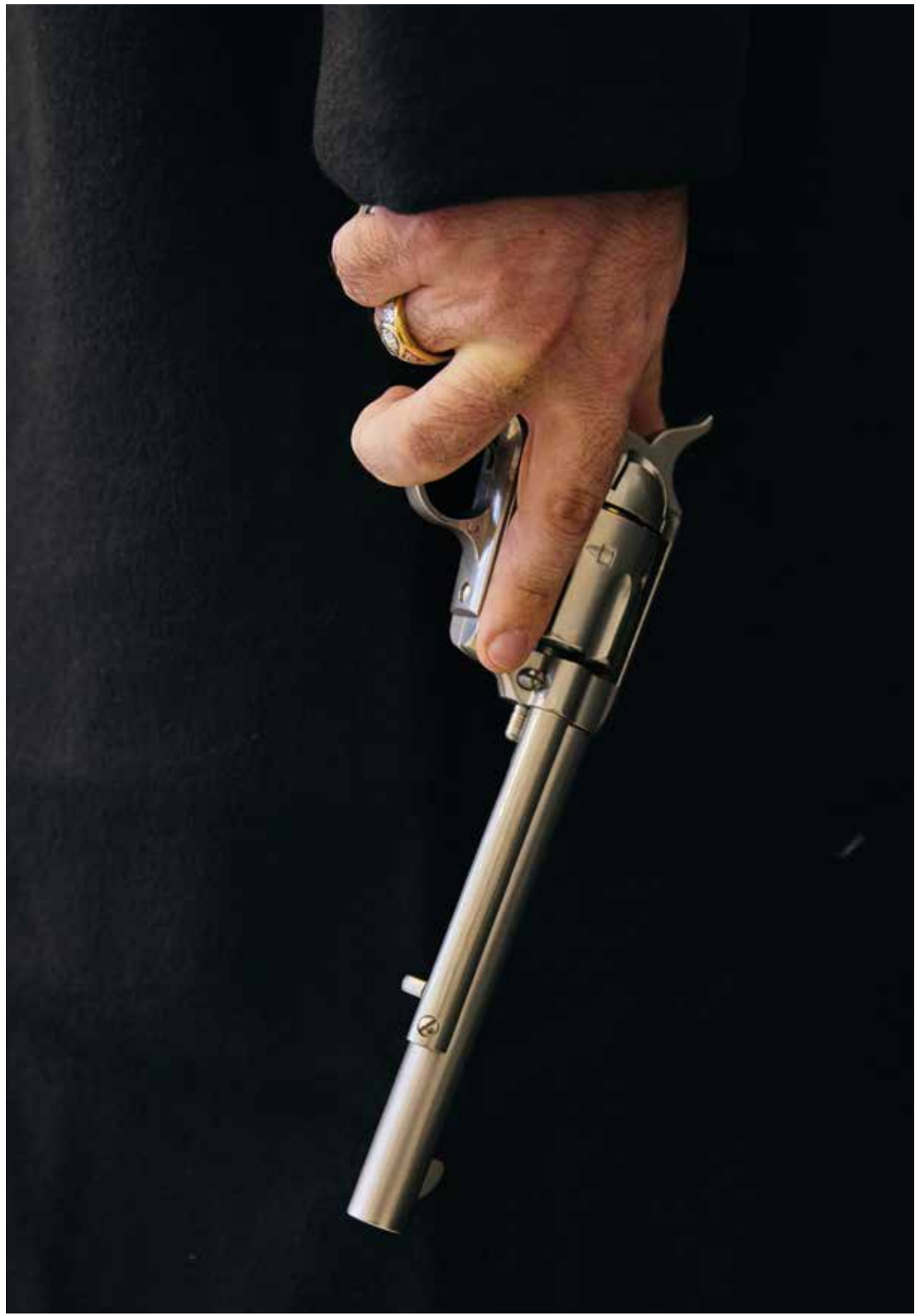


Dancers in rehearsal for *Eugene Onegin* ©2024 Ian Hippolyte





Top: Alison Kettlewell; bottom: Christophe Mortagne in rehearsal for *Eugene Onegin* ©2024 Ian Hippolyte



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Dancers, Gordon Bintner and Liparit Avetisyan in rehearsal for *Eugene Onegin* ©2024 Ian Hippolyte





Top: creative team and production staff; bottom: Henrik Nánási ©2024 Ian Hippolyte





Top: Liparit Avetisyan and Avery Amereau; bottom: clockwise from standing: Jamie Woollard, Gordon Bintner, Liparit Avetisyan, Avery Amereau and Alex Gotch ©2024 Ian Hippolyte



Gordon Bintner in rehearsal for *Eugene Onegin* ©2024 Ian Hippolyte

Biographies



HENRIK NÁNÁSI Conductor
Born in Hungary, Henrik Nánási studied at the Béla Bartók Conservatory in Budapest and at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. He was General Music Director of the Komische Oper Berlin (2012–2017). He has worked with orchestras including the Atlanta Symphony, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony, Bruckner Orchestra Linz, Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica de Madrid, Fort Worth Symphony, Orquesta Filarmónica de Gran Canaria, Filarmonica del Teatro Comunale di Bologna and Sinfonia Varsovia. For The Royal Opera he has conducted *Turandot*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Salome*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Jenůfa* and *Der fliegende Holländer*. His 2024/25 season engagements include Don Carlo at Teatro di San Carlo, Naples, Rigoletto at Hamburg State Opera, his Théâtre des Champs-Élysées debut with a new production of *Der Rosenkavalier*, and his *La traviata* conducting debut at Teatro Real, Madrid.



TED HUFFMAN Director
Ted Huffman is a writer and director for the stage. He studied Humanities at Yale University. Recent productions include *L'incoronazione di Poppea* for Aix-en-Provence Festival, Versailles, Cologne, Rennes, Toulon, and Netherlands Reisoper; *The Faggots and their Friends Between Revolutions* for Manchester International Festival, Holland Festival, Ruhrtriennale Festival, Southbank Centre, Bregenz Festival and Aix-en-Provence Festival; *Street Scene* for Paris Opera; *Denis & Katya* for Opera Philadelphia, DNO, Montpellier, Hannover, and Music Theatre Wales. Past highlights include *4.48 Psychosis* (ROH, Strasbourg), *The Time of our Singing* (Brussels, St. Gallen), *Sonntag aus Licht* (Paris), *Svádba* (Aix-en-Provence Festival, Luxembourg, Ljubljana Festival), *Les mamelles de Tirésias* (Aix-en-Provence Festival, DNO, Brussels, Valencia), *Roméo et Juliette*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Girl with the Pearl Earring* (Zurich), *Rinaldo*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Orlando* (Frankfurt), *Salome* (Cologne), *Le premier meurtre* (Lille), *Trouble in Tahiti* (DNO, Valencia) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Deutsche Oper Berlin, Montpellier), *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno* (Copenhagen, Montpellier), and *Die Vögel* (Strasbourg).



HYEMI SHIN Set Designer
Hyemi Shin trained at Hongik University, Seoul and Wimbledon College of Arts, and was the winner of the 2011 Linbury Prize. Theatre work includes *Machinal* (Old Vic, Theatre Royal Bath), *Once in a Lifetime* (sets), *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* (Young Vic), *Solaris* (Malthouse Melbourne, Lyceum Edinburgh); *The End of Eddy* (Unicorn Theatre); and *The Seagull*, *Herons*, *Morning*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Secret Theatre* (Lyric Hammersmith). Dance includes *New Work New Music* (The Royal Ballet); *Orpheus Alive and Unearth* (National Ballet of Canada); *The Kreutzer Sonata* (Ballet Moscow); and Michael Keegan-Dolan/ Teać Dańsa's *Swan Lake/Loch nahEala*, *MÁM* (costumes) and *How To Be A Dancer in Seventy-two Thousand Easy Lessons*. Opera includes *Giant*, *Wozzeck* and *Samson et Dalila* (The Royal Opera, sets) *La damnation de Faust* (Glyndebourne, sets), T*he Skating Rink* (Garsington Opera, costumes) and *The Return of Ulysses* (The Royal Opera/ Roundhouse, sets).



ASTRID KLEIN Costume Designer
Astrid Klein is a freelance costume designer working in opera and theatre. She holds a Masters from Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, where she studied with Reinhard von der Thannen. As Costume Assistant at the Deutsches Schauspielhaus in Hamburg, she has supervised productions directed by Christoph Marthaler, René Pollesch, Simon Stone, and Karin Beier. She has also assisted costume and set designers including Greta Goiris, Alice Babidge, Anna Viebrock, and Johannes Schütz. Her engagements as a costume designer include *The Marriage of Figaro* for English National Opera (dir. Joe Hill-Gibbins), as well as productions for Deutsches Schauspielhaus Hamburg, Residenztheater Munich, Schauspielhaus Düsseldorf, and Theater Basel. Recent highlights include costume designs for *Street Scene* (Paris Opera), *The Time of our Singing* (La Monnaie), and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Versailles, Cologne, Rennes, Toulon and Netherlands Reisoper); all directed by Ted Huffman.



D.M. WOOD Lighting Designer
D.M. Wood is an international lighting designer working across opera, theatre and live performance. Opera credits include *Polifemo* (Opéra national du Rhin), *Die Walküre* (Greek National Opera, Royal Danish Opera), *La bohème* (Minnesota Opera), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Garsington Opera, Sante Fe Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opéra Orchestre National de Montpellier), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Bayerische Staatsoper), *Arminio* (ROH), *The Rape of Lucretia* (ROH, Snape Maltings); *La traviata* (Norwegian Opera); *Susanna, Berenice, 4.48 Psychosis* (Royal Opera House); *La Juive* (Grand Théâtre de Genève); *Edmea, Le Songe d'une nuit d'été, I Capuleti e i Montecchi, Medea, Margherita, Risurrezione, Salomé, Silent Night and Don Bucefalo* (Wexford Festival Opera); *La favorite* (Houston Grand Opera); *Les Enfants terribles* (Opera Omaha). Theatre credits include West End productions for the Young Vic and the Ambassadors Theatre; and in the US for Manhattan Theatre Club, Geffen Playhouse, McCarter Theatre, Huntington Theatre Company, The New York Public Theatre, American Repertory Theatre and Contemporary American Theatre Festival.



LUCY BURGE Movement Director
Burge was a principal dancer with Rambert (1970–85), performing as a guest artist with Rudolf Nureyev. Her opera movement credits include *The Rake's Progress* (Grange Park Opera), *La Gioconda* (Salzburg Easter Festival), *Madama Butterfly* (Bregenz Festival), *Samson et Dalilah*, *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *L'Heure espagnole/Gianni Schicchi*, *Il trittico*, *Un ballo in maschera* (RBO), *The Girl of the Golden West* (English National Opera, Santa Fe), *Ariodante* (Aix-en-Provence, Amsterdam), *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Welsh National Opera, ENO), *Parsifal* (Paris Opera), *The Makropulos Case* (Frankfurt), *Billy Budd* (Gothenburg, Frankfurt), *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, *Lohengrin* (Bayerische Staatsoper), *Powder Her Face* (Irish National Opera), *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (Nederlandse Reisopera), *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Rusalka*, *The Queen of Spades* (Grange Park Opera), *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Scottish Opera, Opera Holland Park), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Northern Ireland Opera), *Carmen* (Opera North) and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Glyndebourne Festival). Theatre work includes *Oliver Twist* (Regent's Park Theatre) and *Oresteia* (Shakespeare's Globe).



WILLIAM SPAULDING Chorus Director
Born in Washington D.C., he studied at the University of Maryland and the Vienna Hochschule, and was appointed Associate Chorus Master at Vienna Volksoper in 1997. He went on to become Principal Chorus Master of the Liceu, Barcelona, and from 2007 to 2016 was Chorus Director at Deutsche Oper Berlin, where he was also appointed Kapellmeister in 2012. He and the Chorus were awarded 'Chorus of the Year' by Opernwelt three years in a row (2008–10), and the 2012 European Chorus Prize from the Foundation 'Pro Europa'. He has also conducted *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Nabucco*, Verdi's Requiem and *Carmen* (Deutsche Oper Berlin). He joined The Royal Opera as Chorus Director of the Royal Opera Chorus in September 2016 and in this role has moderated and presented several Insights events and was conductor for the short film *ROH Unlocked*. He has been Guest Chorus Master at the London Symphony Chorus since 2019.



VASKO VASSILEV Principal Guest Concert Master by arrangement with Trittico
Born in Sofia, he was a prize-winner in three major international violin competitions as a teenager, subsequently embarking on an international career as a soloist, conductor, leader and producer. He became the Royal Opera House's first ever Concert Master, and its youngest, in 1993 and he is now Principal Guest Concert Master by arrangement with Trittico. In 2005 he made his British conducting debut at the Royal Albert Hall, and was appointed Creative Producer of the Royal Opera House. He is Artistic Director of Trittico, for which he produces and performs both traditional and contemporary repertory with various artists, groups and orchestras. He is also Artistic Director of the Soloists of Covent Garden, London Chamber Orchestra and Laureate, an orchestra made up exclusively of international prize-winners.



AVERY AMEREAU Olga
Avery Amereau made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 2016 as the Madrigal Singer in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*. She has performed at Bayerische Staatsoper, Santa Fe Opera, Seattle Opera, Opéra de Lyon, Grand Théâtre de Genève, English National Opera, along with the Glyndebourne and Salzburg Festivals. During the 2023/24 season, she joined the guest ensemble at the Bayerische Staatsoper, performing Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Third Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) and her role debut as Amando (*Le Grand Macabre*). Elsewhere, she made her role debut as the title role in Carmen with the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra and returned to English National Opera to reprise the role of Serena Joy (*The Handmaid's Tale*). 2024/25 Season highlights include returns to Bayerische Staatsoper for Amando (*Le Grande Macabre*) and her role debuts as Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) and Leda (*Die Liebe der Danae*). This is her Royal Opera debut.



LIPARIT AVETISYAN Lensky
Born in Yerevan, he studied at the Tchaikovsky Moscow State Conservatory and the Yerevan State Conservatory. For The Royal Opera he has sung the Duke of Mantua, Alfredo and Nemorino. Other appearances include Alfredo (Semperoper Dresden, Zurich Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Bolshoi Theatre, Opera Australia, Hamburg, Berlin State Opera), Duke of Mantua (Seattle Opera, Opera Australia, Dresden, Cologne, Zurich), Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Dresden), Chevalier des Grieux in *Manon* (Yerevan Opera, Stanislavsky Opera), Lensky (Opéra national du Rhin), Tamino (Festival Castell de Peralada), Rodolfo in *La bohème* (Frankfurt Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Toulouse), Vaudemont in *Iolanta* with the Berlin Philharmonic and Faust (Teatro Colón, Buenos Aires). Awards include Second Prize in the Maria Biesu International Singing Competition and the III Muslim Magomaev International Vocalists Contest, the Golden Mask for the Best Opera Actor, Onegin National Opera Award, Artavazd National Theater Award and Swallow Music Award. He is an Honoured Artist of the Republic of Armenia. 2024/25 Season highlights include *La bohème* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at Vienna State Opera, *Rigoletto* in Zurich and *La traviata* at Bayerische Staatsoper.



DMITRY BELOSSELSKIY Prince Gremin
Dmitry Belosselskiy trained at the Russian Academy of Music, and his awards include second prize at the XIII International Tchaikovsky Competition. Career highlights include Zaccaria (*Nabucco*), Daland (*Der fliegende Holländer*), Ramfis (*Aida*) and Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*) for the Metropolitan Opera, Grand Inquisitor (*Don Carlo*) at the Bayerische Staatsoper, Lyric Opera of Chicago and Bolshoi Theatre, Doctor (*Wozzeck*), Fafner (*Siegfried*/*Das Rheingold*) and Hunding (*Die Walküre*) for the Wiener Staatsoper, Zaccaria (*Nabucco*) for Opernhaus Zurich, Heinrich der Vogler (*Lohengrin*) and Escamillo for the Bolshoi Theatre, Dosifey (*Khovanshchina*) for Paris Opera, Ramfis (*Aida*) for Teatro Regio di Torino, Zaccaria and Filippo II (*Don Carlos*) for Teatro Real Madrid, Boris (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*) for Oper Frankfurt, Il conte di Walter (*Luisa Miller*) at the Liceu, Barcelona. 2024/25 Season highlights include Rocco (*Fidelio*) for The Royal Opera, Ramfis (*Aida*) for The Met, Grand Inquisitor for the Bayerische Staatsoper and Boris (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*) at the Leipzig Shostakovich Festival. This is his Royal Opera debut.



GORDON BINTNER Eugene Onegin
Recent house debuts for Canadian bass-baritone Gordon Bintner include San Francisco Opera as Eugene Onegin, and Paris Opera as Junior (*A Quiet Place*), where his roles have also included Oronte (*Médée*)and Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*). A former member of Canadian Opera Company's Opera Studio, his roles there include Don Giovanni, Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and his role debuts as Eugene Onegin and Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*), and as Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*). Roles as an Oper Frankfurt ensemble member include Count Almaviva and Figaro (Le nozze di Figaro), Papageno, Argante (*Rinaldo*), Gorjančikov (From the House of the Dead), Chorèbe (*Les Troyens*), Graf (*Capriccio*), Harlekin (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Count (*Der ferne Klang*). Previously roles for The Royal Opera include Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) and Albert (*Werther*) under Antonio Pappano. 2024/25 Season highlights include a house debut as Almaviva for the Lyric Opera of Chicago and a return to Opéra de Paris as Golaud (*Pelléas et Mélisande*).



RHONDA BROWNE Filipyevna
Born in New Zealand, Rhonda Browne studied on the Singers of Tomorrow programme at the National Opera Studio and won the London Wagner Society's Bayreuth Bursary and Audience Prize. Roles include Erda (*Das Rheingold*, *Siegfried*), and Schwertleite (*Die Walküre*) for Longborough Festival Opera, Filipyevna (*Eugene Onegin*) for West Green House Opera, Lady Bertram (*Mansfield Park*) for Opera South, Baba the Turk (*The Rake's Progress*) for Bury Court Opera, Mistress Bentson (*Lakmé*) for Swansea City Opera, Witch (*Hänsel und Gretel*) for Lyric Opera Ireland, Pop-Up Opera, Iford Arts, Opera in Space and Open Door Opera, Auntie (*Peter Grimes*) with the Nottingham Philharmonic, The Duchess of Plaza Toro (*The Gondoliers*), Ludmila (*The Bartered Bride*) and Gudrun in the world premiere of Coleridge Taylor's *Thelma* for Surrey Opera, Zia Principessa (*Suor Angelica*) for Talent Unlimited and Giornata Opera, Zita (*Gianni Schicchi*) for Fulham Opera, Handel's *Messiah* for The Merry Opera Company and Rossweisse (*Die Walküre*) for The Mastersingers.



ALISON KETTLEWELL Madame Larina
Born in Taunton, Somerset, Alison Kettlewell trained at the Royal Northern College of Music and on the Royal College of Music opera course. She was a winner of the AsLiCo Competition for Young Opera Singers of Europe and a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier Awards. Roles include Madame Larina (*Eugene Onegin*) for Scottish Opera; La Frugola (*Il trittico*) for Welsh National Opera; Little Buttercup (HMS Pinafore) for English National Opera; Venus (*Tannhäuser*), Fricka and Waltraute (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*) for Longborough Festival Opera; Charlotte (*Werther*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) and Secretary (The Consul) for Opera Holland Park; Kate Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*) and Mercédès (*Carmen*) for Raymond Gubbay; Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) in Como, Pisa and Lucca; Diamantina (*L'isola di Merlino*) in Cremona, Mantova and Brescia; Dorisbe (*Gustavo il re di Svezia*) for the Montepulciano Festival. Contemporary opera roles include Matilda and George (*Errollyn Wallen's Cautionary Tales*) for Opera North; and Mother (Roderick Watkins' *The Juniper Tree*) for Almeida Opera and the Munich Biennale.



SIPHE KWANI Captain
South African baritone Siphe Kwani's awards include First Prize and Audience Prize in the 2019 Schock Foundation Prize for singing and First Prize in the Friends of Cape Town Opera (FoCTO) bursary competition for singers (2022). Roles include Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) in a collaboration between the University of Cape Town and Cape Town Opera, *Gianni Schicchi* with the Operatunity Company, and, with University of Capetown Opera, Ferryman (*Curlew River*), Alexander Dunlop in the world premiere of *Sarah Baartman* by South African composer Hendrick Hofmeyr, Tarabotto (*L'Inganno felice*), Lindorf/Dr Miracle (*The Tales of Hoffmann*) and Giorgio Germont (*La traviata*). He joined the Jette Parker Artists Programme in the 2024 Season, during which his roles include First Prisoner (*Fidelio*) and Dancairo (*Carmen*). This is his Royal Opera debut.



KRISTINA MKHITARYAN Tatyana
Russian soprano Kristina Mkhitaryan made her Royal Opera debut in the 2017/18 Season as Micaëla (*Carmen*), a role in which she returned in the 2018/19 Season. In the 2019/20 Season she sang Violetta Valéry (*La traviata*). Kristina Mkhitaryan studied at the Galina Vishnevskaya Theatre Studio in Moscow and at the Russian Gnessin Academy of Music. She was a member of the Bolshoi Theatre's Young Artist Programme (2012–2015). She won First Prize at the Queen Sonja International Competition (2013), Third Prize at the Neue Stimmen Competition (2013) and Second Prize at the Operalia competition (2017). Recent opera appearances include Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin* (Liceu, Barcelona), Musetta in *La bohème* (Metropolitan Opera) and Liù in *Turandot*, Adina in *L'elisir d'Amore* and Micaëla in *Carmen* (Vienna State Opera). 2024/25 Season engagements include Soprano Soloist in *The Bells* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Massenet's *Manon* for Vienna State Opera, Tatyana for Teatro Real, Madrid and her role debut as Mimì (*La bohème*) for the Metropolitan Opera.



CHRISTOPHE MORTAGNE Monsieur Triquet
French tenor Christophe Mortagne made his Royal Opera debut in 2010 as Guillot de Morfontaine (*Manon*) and has since returned to sing Monsieur Triquet (*Eugene Onegin*), Guillot de Morfontaine, King Ouf I (*L'Étoile*) and Spalanzani (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*). Mortagne was born in France and studied at the Paris Conservatoire. Opera engagements include Guillot de Morfontaine (Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Milan, and NHK Hall, Tokyo), Monsieur Triquet for Opéra de Lyon, King Ouf I for Frankfurt Opera and Dutch National Opera, Spoletta (*Tosca*) for the Chorégies d'Orange Festival, the title role in *Le Roi carotte* for Opéra de Lyon (winner of the International Opera Award for Rediscovered Work) and Le Fellah and First Vendor (Rabaud's *Mârouf, savetier du Caire*) for the Opéra-Comique. Mortagne also works as an actor. He has been a member of the Comédie-Française and has performed at many French theatres.



JAMIE WOOLLARD Zaretsky
British Bass Jamie Woollard joined the Jette Parker Artists Programme in the 2023/24 Season. He is a graduate of the Royal College of Music Opera Studio where roles included Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*), Jupiter (*Orpheus in the Underworld*), and Il Re (*La bella dormente nel bosco*). Woollard was a Jerwood Young Artist for Glyndebourne Opera Festival in 2023 and made his debut there as Thierry (*Dialogues des Carmélites*). In concert, he has performed Handel's *Messiah* (CBSO), Mozart's Requiem (St Martin-in-the-Fields), highlights from Haydn's *L'infedeltà delusa* with The Mozartists (Cadogan Hall), and Teresa Barlow's Requiem (premiere with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra). Woollard is a Samling Artist and performed in their 2024 artist showcase at Wigmore Hall. For The Royal Opera he has performed the premieres of three micro-operas (*Lost and Found*), Zuniga (*Carmen*), Ceprano (*Rigoletto*), and Dumas (*Andrea Chénier*). Roles in the 2024/25 Season include Sciaronne (*Tosca*), and Zuniga (*Carmen*).

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Water refill stations are available on all levels. Bring a reusable bottle with you, or buy a refillable bottle from our shop and bars.

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Details are correct at the time of going to press.
Please check the website for subsequent changes.

Printed by Pureprint Group, an ISO 14001, FSC® and CarbonNeutral® accredited printing company.

The carbon produced in the manufacturing of the material and during its delivery to Pureprint has been offset with The World Land Trust.
The paper and the printing are therefore carbon neutral.
Both the paper mill and printer are registered to the Environmental Management System ISO 14001 and are Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) chain-of custody certified.

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