ROYAL OPERA

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ANDREA CHÉNIER

DRAMMA ISTORICO IN FOUR ACTS

MUSIC **UMBERTO GIORDANO**
LIBRETTO **LUIGI ILLICA**
BY ARRANGEMENT WITH **CASA MUSICALE SONZOGNO DI PIERO OSTALI**

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PRINCIPAL GUEST CONCERT MASTER BY ARRANGEMENT WITH TRITTICO **VASKO VASSILEV**

30 MAY | 2 | 5 | 8 | 11 JUNE 2024

A co-production with CHINA NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, BEIJING and SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

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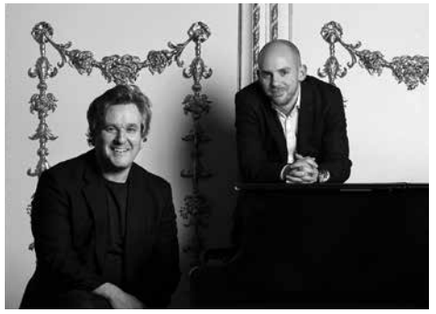
WELCOME



Although he composed 12 operas during his long life, Umberto Giordano's fame rests purely on two of these: *Andrea Chénier* and *Fedora*. Both owe their success to their heart-on-sleeve emotionalism, intense drama (and, unapologetically, melodrama), and skilled writing for the tenor and soprano voices – meaning that they have been successful star vehicles for over a century. But at the heart of Giordano's masterpiece *Andrea Chénier* is also a moving story of political commitment and embattled love – making it a worthy and rare successor to the great operas of Verdi.

David McVicar's classic production embraces the Revolutionary era with bravura panache. In his final production as Music Director of The Royal Opera, Antonio Pappano conducts an outstanding cast led by Jonas Kaufmann, Sondra Radvanovsky, Amartuvshin Enkhbat and Aleksei Isaev.

We would like to thank Julia and Hans Rausing, Aline Foriel-Destezet, Aud Jebsen, Mrs Susan A. Olde OBE, David Fransen, Charles and Kaaren Hale, Mr and Mrs Baha Bassatne, Peter Harrison and Fiona Willis, Alan and Caroline Howard, Susan and John Singer, John Sunderland and George Shishkovsky, the Jean Sainsbury Royal Opera House Fund, Martin and Jane Houston, Mrs Trevor Swete, The Friends of Covent Garden, The American Friends of Covent Garden and Rolex for their generous philanthropic support of this revival.

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Antonio Pappano CVO, Music Director of The Royal Opera**

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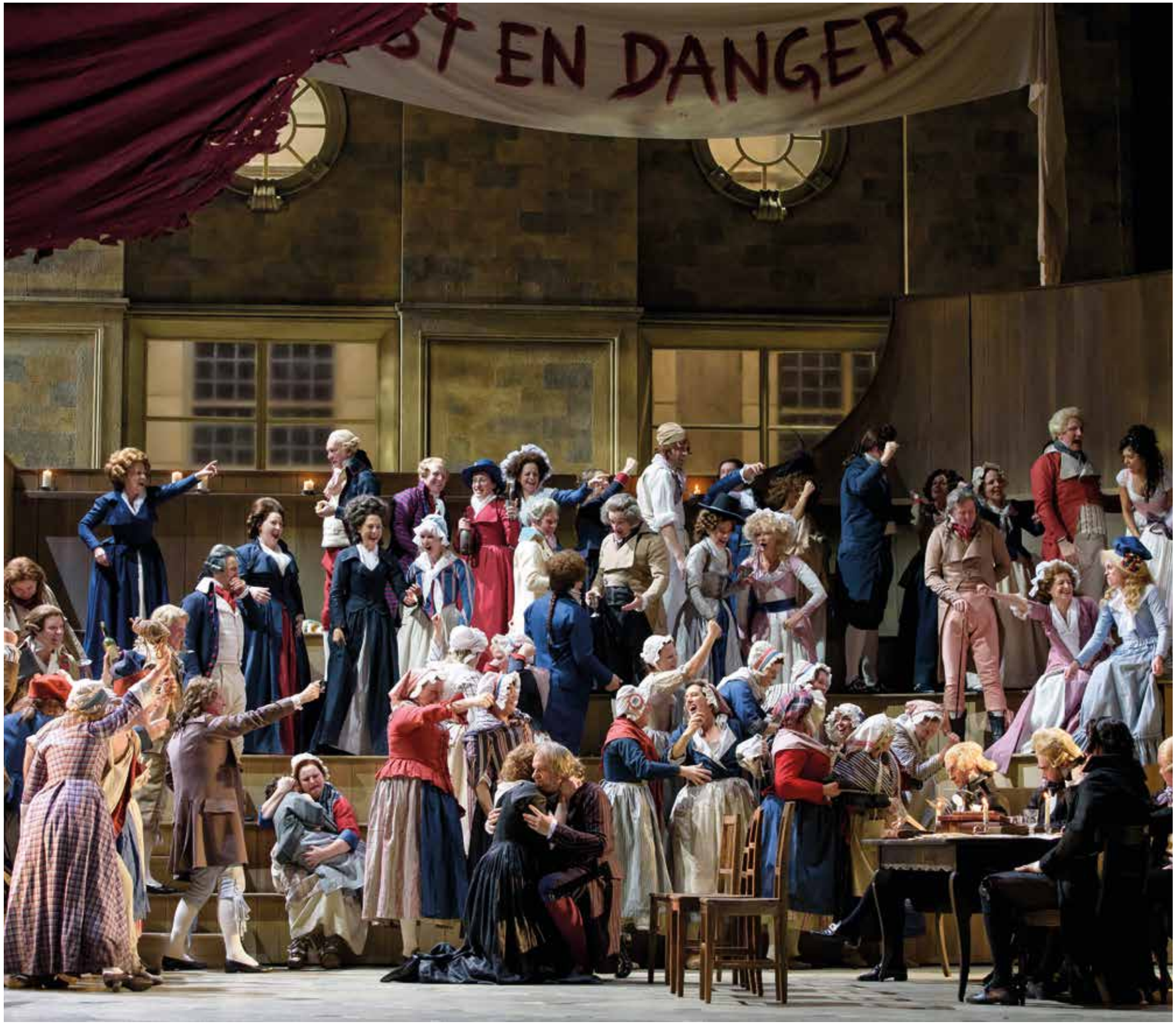
CONTENTS



Eva-Maria Westbroek, Željko Lučić and Royal Opera Chorus, *Andrea Chénier*
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CAST

CARLO GÉRARD
AMARTUVSHIN ENKHBAT
30 MAY | 2 | 5 JUN
ALEKSEI ISAEV
8 | 11 JUN

MAJOR-DOMO
SIMON THORPE

AN OLD GARDENER
Gérard's father
RICHARD HOLLIDAY

MADDALENA DI COIGNY
SONDRA RADVANOVSKY

BERSI
KATIA LEDOUX

CONTESSA DI COIGNY
ROSALIND PLOWRIGHT

PIETRO FLÉVILLE
WILLIAM DAZELEY

FILANDRO FIORINELLI
RICH GITTINS

ANDREA CHÉNIER
JONAS KAUFMANN

THE ABBÉ
ALED HALL

MATHIEU
JAMES CLEVERTON

ORAZIO COCLITE
MICHAEL KENNETH STEWART

THE INCREDIBILE (AN INCROYABLE)
ALEXANDER KRAVETS

ROUCHER
ASHLEY RICHES

MAXIMILIEN ROBESPIERRE
ANDREW HOBDAY

MADELON
ELENA ZILIO

MADELON'S GRANDSON
HARRY SANDRINGHAM,
30 MAY | 2 | 5 JUN
MARKEL STEWART-ARRIEN
2 | 8 | 11 JUN

FOUQUIER-TINVILLE
EDDIE WADE

DUMAS
JAMIE WOOLLARD*

GRAVIER DE VERGENNES
RICHARD HOLLIDAY

LAVAL-MONTMORENCY
IRENE HARDY

IDIA LEGRAY
JUDITH GEORGI

SCHMIDT
JEREMY WHITE

Aristocrats, servants, footmen, sans-culottes, patriots, urchins, soldiers

*Jette Parker Artist

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

SYNOPSIS

ACT I
The Winter Garden at the Château Coigny, 1789

The Contessa di Coigny is about to host an elaborate party. One of her footmen, Carlo Gérard, watches with pity as his elderly father, a gardener at the château, struggles to help with the preparations. Gérard is disgusted at the idleness of the aristocracy and looks forward to the imminent destruction of their privileged lives (T'odio, casa dorata!). The Contessa enters with her daughter Maddalena and Maddelena's companion Bersi, and gives copious orders to the servants. Gérard, who has been secretly in love with Maddalena since they were children, watches resentfully.

The guests arrive. They include the writer Pietro Fléville, who has brought with him two protégés, the poet Andrea Chénier and the musician Filandro Fiorinelli. The Contessa's Abbé arrives with the latest news from Paris. The guests are alarmed by his tales of political unrest in the capital. Fléville attempts to distract them with the entertainment he has organized for the evening, a pastoral idyll.The Contessa asks Chénier to recite a poem but he declines, much to her annoyance. At Maddalena's provoking insistence, Chénier improvises some verses. His theme is the delineation of 'love'. He contrasts his feelings of patriotic love for France with the idle indifference of the aristocracy and church to the sufferings of its people (Un dì all'azzurro spazio). Moved and shamed, Maddalena asks to be excused and rushes from the room. The Contessa's guests are appalled by Chénier's words. Chénier leaves. Gérard, who has listened intently, remains in a state of high emotion.

Musicians strike up a gavotte and the Contessa invites her guests to dance. The angry voices of a mob are suddenly heard outside, approaching the château. Gérard flings open the windows to let the starving peasants in. The Contessa orders the footmen to throw them out. Gérard defies her, throwing off his servant's livery, and leaves with his father and the crowd. The Contessa is shaken but commands that the party continue.

ACT II
The Café Hottot, by the Perronet Bridge, Paris, 1794

France has been in the throes of Revolution for five years. The King and Queen have been executed and the government, dominated by Robespierre's Jacobin party, have imposed 'The Terror'. Show-trials and executions take place daily.

Chénier is seated at a table, writing. Mathieu, a sans-culotte, is busily attending to an altar celebrating the Revolutionary martyr Marat. Bersi, now a merveilleuse, is also there, closely observed by the Incredibile (an Incroyable), a Jacobin spy who notes with interest her attempts to catch Chénier's attention. Confronting him, she declares herself a patriotic daughter of the Revolution, but the Incredibile is suspicious of her connection to a mysterious fair-haired woman he is searching for. He resolves to watch her and Chénier closely.

Chénier's friend Roucher arrives with a passport he has procured for him. Initially a leading figure of the Revolution, Chénier has fallen from favour, as an outspoken critic of the Jacobins. Roucher advises him to leave France as soon as possible. Chénier is reluctant; he is intrigued by a series of ardent letters he has received from a mysterious woman, who signs herself only with the single word 'Hope'. Roucher deciphers the letters as the work of a merveilleuse and advises his friend to give them no more thought.

A crowd gathers to see the Representatives of the National Convention process by, led by Robespierre himself. Gérard, having prospered in the Revolution, is now a popular Jacobin and is acclaimed by the people as he enters. The Incredibile draws him aside; it is Gérard who has set him the task of finding the fair woman he suspects to be associated with Bersi. The Incredibile promises to track her down by nightfall. Bersi returns with a group of merveilleuses and tells Chénier that 'Hope' will come to meet him that evening by the altar of Marat. Roucher says he will keep watch during the assignation. All the while, the Incredibile is listening and observing.

As darkness falls, the mysterious woman appears and Chénier approaches her. It is Maddalena. Hidden for months by Bersi, she has written to Chénier in the desperate hope that he remembers her and will offer her his protection. Chénier has never forgotten the young woman at the Château Coigny. They realize that they love each other (Ecco l'altare).

The couple are suddenly surprised by Gérard and the Incredibile. Roucher drags Maddalena away to safety and Chénier draws his sword. He fights and wounds Gérard. Recognizing the poet whose words inspired him five years earlier, Gérard warns Chénier to flee with Maddalena; Chénier's name is on the list of the Public Prosecutor, Fouquier-Tinville. When the sans-culottes arrive, Gérard says he does not know who attacked him.

INTERVAL

ACT III

The Hall of the Revolutionary Tribunal, a few months later Chénier and Maddalena have fled Paris and are in hiding. Mathieu attempts to stir up support for the Revolutionary cause: France is in danger, threatened by foreign invasion and internal rebellion. But the listening crowd is silent and sullen. Gérard arrives, recovered from his wounds, and stirs the people with an impassioned plea. He directs the women of France to offer their sons and jewels to the Revolution. A blind old woman, Madelon, comes forward. She has lost both her son and eldest grandson, fighting for their country, and now offers her youngest grandson, all that remains of her family, in their place. The crowd are moved and give whatever money and jewellery they can before filing out.

The Incredibile has not given up his pursuit of Maddalena and he now arrives to tell Gérard that Chénier has been taken, hiding at a friend's house in Passy. Outside, newspaper vendors are heard crying abroad the arrest of the poet Andrea Chénier. The Incredibile is certain that Maddalena will be forced out of hiding and come to Gérard to try to save her lover. Despite himself, Gérard is tasked with framing an indictment against the poet. He reflects

bitterly on his hypocrisy in denouncing Chénier – once the servant of the aristocracy, he has become the slave of his own passions (Nemico della patria?).

Just as the Incredibile predicted, Maddalena comes to plead for Chénier's life. Gérard confesses his uncontrollable passion for her. She offers herself to him in exchange for Chénier's freedom. She recalls the terrible death of her mother the Contessa, butchered by the mob before her eyes. She remembers fleeing with Bersi from the blazing château and how Bersi hid her in Paris, taking to prostitution to support them both. Only Chénier's love has sustained her, has given her the will to continue living (La mamma morta).

Gérard becomes master of himself again. He swears to do all he can to save Chénier, as the public now swarms into the hall for the latest show-trial. Three defendants, including a young mother, Idia Legray, are quickly dealt with, but when Fouquier-Tinville reads out the indictment against Chénier, he demands to be heard (Si, fui soldato). Gérard comes forward as a witness and repudiates his own accusations. But the mob turn against their erstwhile hero and howl him down. The jury quickly deliberate and return their verdict. As Gérard turns Chénier's face so that he may see Maddalena once again in the public gallery, the court condemns him to be guillotined.

ACT IV
The courtyard of the St Lazare Prison, the next morning, before dawn

Chénier is writing, Roucher at his side. Chénier reads his final poem to Roucher (Come un bel dì di maggio), comparing the sunset of his life to the end of a fine spring day. Moved, Roucher embraces his friend and leaves with the verses in his hand. Gérard arrives with Maddalena. She and Gérard bribe the gaoler, Schmidt, into letting her take the place of Idia Legray, condemned to die that morning alongside Chénier. Gérard bids her farewell and leaves to plead once more with Robespierre for the life of Chénier. Alone together, Chénier and Maddalena jubilantly and fearlessly prepare for death. The dawn rises with no word from Robespierre. The lovers go to the guillotine (Vicino a te s'acqueta).

Synopsis and historical notes (right) by David McVicar.

HISTORICAL NOTES

THE SANS-CULOTTES (literally: without knee-breeches) were the radical, left-wing working classes who made up the ground troops of the Revolution in its early years.

JEAN-PAUL MARAT, scientist and writer, was a powerful Jacobin and an instigator of the Terror. He was murdered, lying in his bath, by a Girondist sympathizer, Charlotte Corday, in 1793, and was subsequently celebrated as a martyr of the Revolution. His embalmed corpse was displayed in tableau to the public in the former Notre Dame Cathedral.

THE INCROYABLES AND MERVEILLEUSES were in reality a revivalist aristocratic movement, who flourished from 1795–99, after the fall of Robespierre and the end of the Terror. They were remarkable for the extremity of their dress, the merveilleuses basing their gowns on Greek and Roman models, with revealing results that cast doubt on their sexual morals. Luigi Illica transfers them back to the Terror, maybe to add historical colour to his libretto.

CHARLES-HENRI SANSON and his son Henri were the public executioners of Paris. Father and then son guillotined Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette in turn. The tumbrel that took the prisoners to the place of execution was known as 'Sanson's chariot.'

All of the names cried out during the procession of the Representatives belong to historical figures; among them **GEORGES COUTHON**, paralyzed and bound to a wheelchair of his own devising, the artist **JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID**, who survived to become court painter to the Emperor Napoleon, and Robespierre's youngest brother, **AUGUSTIN**. It is Augustin whom Chénier mockingly calls 'the little Robespierre.'

FRANÇOIS CHABOT was a revolutionary who began his career as a monk. He was a notoriously bad swordsman, hence Chénier's mocking use of his name to taunt Gérard.

ANTOINE FOUQUIER-TINVILLE was the fearsome Prosecutor of the Committee of Public Safety. His job was to put to trial and dispose of enemies of the State as quickly and efficiently as possible. To appear on his list was tantamount to a death sentence. He presided at the trial of Danton in April 1794. He was executed himself in 1795.

CHARLES FRANÇOIS DUMOURIEZ was a general of the Revolutionary army. Initially a national hero, he fell from favour with the rise of the Jacobins and was denounced by the National Assembly. He defected to the Austrians and was declared a traitor.

TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE was the liberator of the former colony of Haiti.

Gérard wonders if Chénier was a student at the **MILITARY ACADEMY OF ST CYR**, actually only established several years after 1794.

Illica sets the scene of Chénier's last night at the prison of Saint- Lazare. In fact, prisoners bound for the guillotine were held at the Conciergerie.

Robespierre signed André Chénier's death warrant with a single sentence: 'Même Platon a banni les poètes de sa République' (Even Plato banned poets from his Republic). Chénier died on 25 July 1794, aged 31. Robespierre was seized and executed just three days later, ending the Terror.

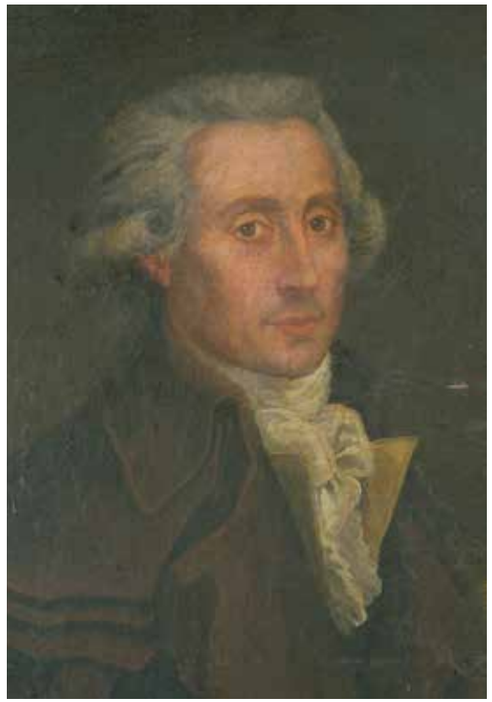
THE ROGUES' GALLERY

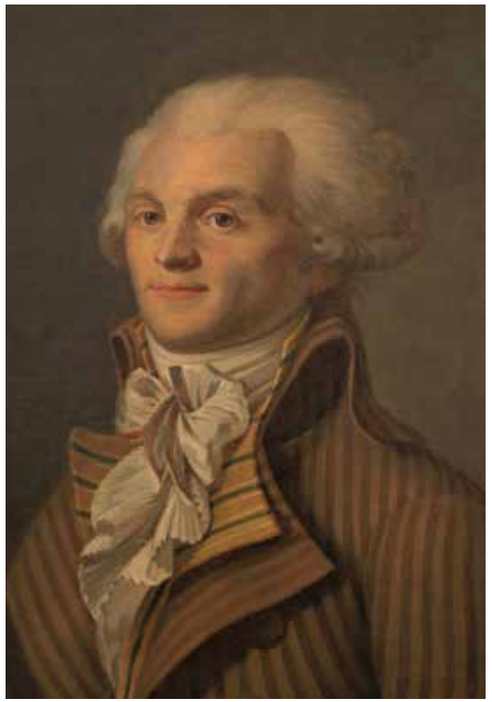
Mark Darlow

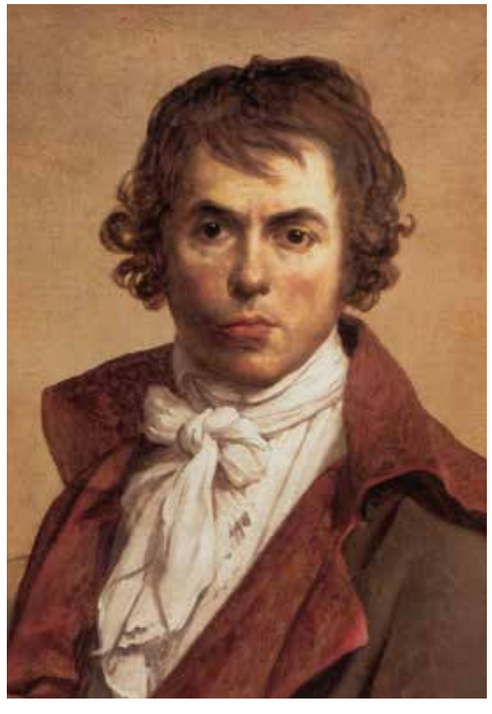
> 'There goes Gérard! Long live Gérard! Long live Robespierre! Barère! Collot d'Herbois! Here is Couthon! Saint-Just! David! Tallien! Fréron! Barras! Fouché! Le Bas! Thuriot! Carnot! Robespierre!' (*Andrea Chénier*, Act II)

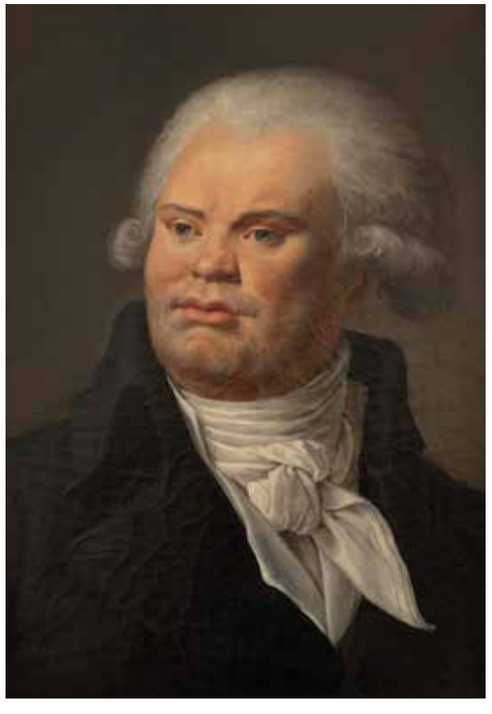
Verismo opera was at home with a varied cast of real-life characters, and it seems fitting that a prominent work of the genre should comprise the parade of Revolutionaries we see in Acts II and III of *Andrea Chénier*. The vast majority are acclaimed by the mob in the above-cited torrent during Chénier's dialogue with his (also real-life) friend Roucher in Act II, and although they attract little accompanying comment these individuals form a veritable roll-call of radical politics at the height of the French Revolution. Although the specificities of the poet Chénier's output are glossed over in the libretto with general references to his writing as 'a scourge to lash all hypocrites', the picture of the Paris in which he is tried and executed is, thanks to such names and other related allusions, detailed and evocative: among trivial details providing historical colour we hear about Montgolfier hats, Franz Anton Mesmer, the actress Dugazon, the controller general of finances Necker, the battle of Valmy, the song *La Carmagnole*. What may not be entirely clear from Illica's libretto, though, is that Chénier had considerable involvement in Parisian politics during the Revolutionary period, as an early defender of liberty, of the importance of the Constitution and later as a critic of the Jacobins: political engagement that brought exactly the peril alluded to somewhat vaguely by Roucher at the beginning of Act II, when he urges Chénier, passport in hand, to flee.

Born in Constantinople in 1762, **André Chénier** was the third son of a French consul who returned to France when André was three years old. He was noticed as a gifted writer of verse as early as his school years, and his interest in antiquity, particularly the verse of Theocritus, was strong. A gifted lyric poet before the Revolution began, he moved to Britain in 1787 and only returned shortly after the Revolution's beginning, by which time his younger brother, Marie-Joseph, had enjoyed something of a *succès de scandale* for his 'national tragedy', *Charles IX, ou l'École des rois*. On his return to France in April 1790 Chénier rapidly became involved in contemporary events, showing early interest in constitutional monarchy: his poetic output was henceforth composed of both classicizing lyric works and more politically-motivated pieces; he was also a prominent contributor to Revolutionary papers. His most significant biographer in English, Francis Scarfe, has traced his early involvement with the 'Society of 1789', then with the constitutional party (or Feuillants), his writings against the radical Jacobin party and his later trial

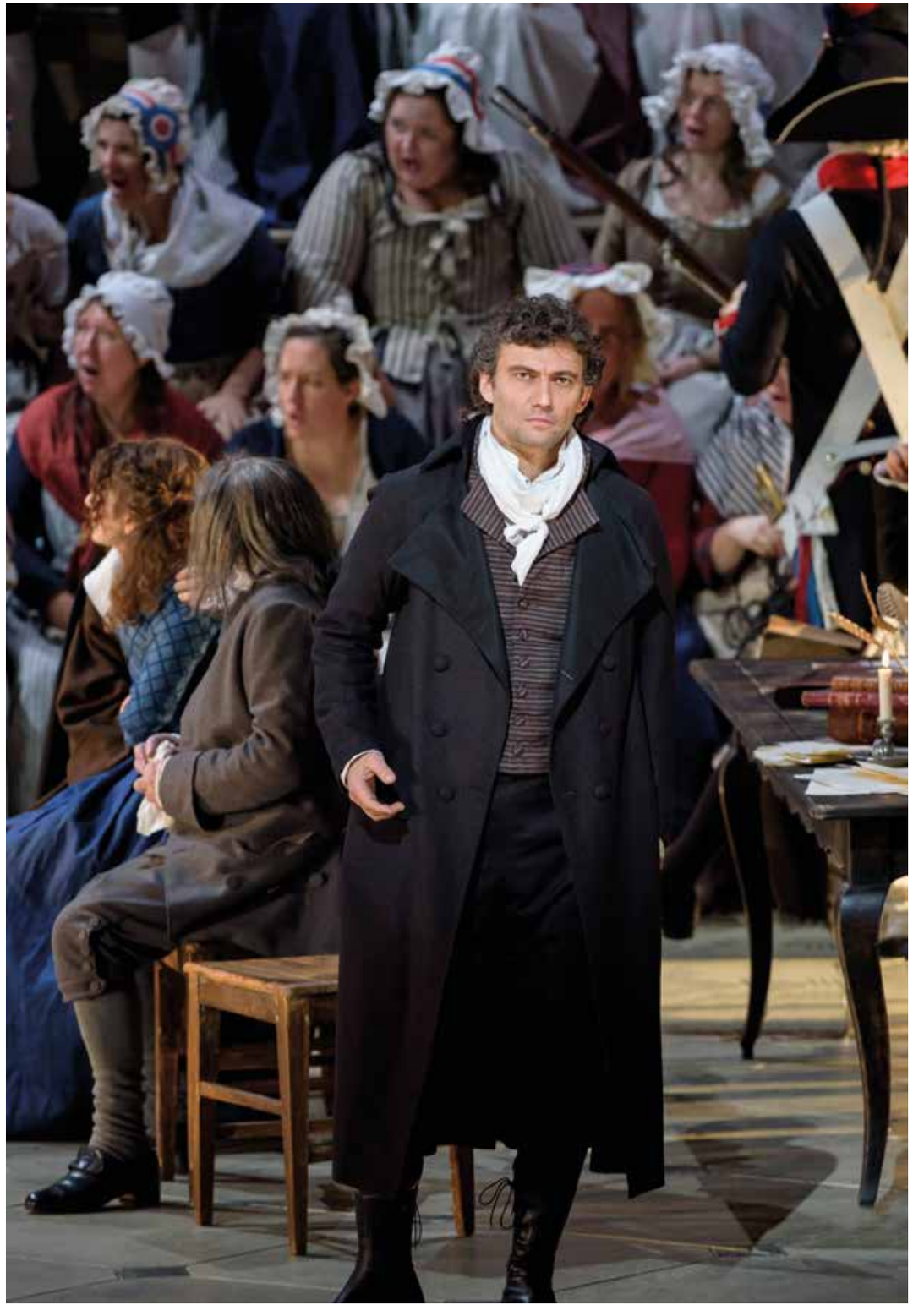








Clockwise from top left: Georges Couthon (1755–94): oil on canvas by François Bonneville (fl.1787); Maximilien de Robespierre (1758–94): oil on canvas by French school (18th century); Georges Danton (1759–94): oil on canvas by French school (18th century) © All three Musées de la Ville de Paris/Musée Carnavalet/Bridgeman Images; Jacques-Louis David (1748–1825): detail of self portrait, oil on canvas (1794) © Musée du Louvre, Paris/Bridgeman Images



Jonas Kaufmann, *Andrea Chénier* © 2015 ROH. Photographed by Bill Cooper

and execution. Many of the individuals named in Acts II and III of Giordano's opera were explicitly critiqued by Chénier himself, either in his writings for periodicals, or in his poetry, and where they were not, vaguer discussions of political positions or types of individuals would have stirred animosity from precisely those individuals. His brother's espousal of radical Jacobin politics alongside the painter **Jacques-Louis David** (**1748–1825**) led to a rift with André and increasing animosity between the two; André's at times passionate critiques of the radical left were to lead to angry denunciations in print and his eventual arrest, trial and execution.

Not all of the contemporaries mentioned above were hostile, however. Chénier's very first periodical text, the 'Notice to the French people, Concerning her true foes' (1790), had spoken warmly about several individuals working towards a new order. **Abbé Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès** (**1748–1836**), author of the famous pamphlets *Essay on Privileges* and *What is the Third Estate?*, is named by Chénier as a moderating force who condemns revolutionary fanaticism and yet is denounced by radicals as an enemy of the State. Sieyès, who would go on to vote for the King's death in January 1793 and later still to work with Napoleon as a co-plotter of the Brumaire coup in 1799, was, in the early Revolution, prominent chiefly for composing the 'Tennis Court Oath', whereby the newly-styled 'National Assembly' swore not to disband until it had provided France with a constitution. As a reprimand to radicals, on both sides of the political spectrum, Chénier's text was bound to invite animosity. **Camille Desmoulins** (**1760–94**), who was later to call, as author of the paper *Le Vieux Cordelier* (*The Old Cordelier*), for a relaxation of the excesses of the Terror, was nevertheless a passionate partisan of popular insurrection, and condemned Chénier's text in print, perhaps personally stung by its critique of supporters of the mob.

One crucial issue for all those involved in Revolutionary politics was of course the rapidly shifting ideological context in which they had to operate: the increasing sectarianism of the years 1791–93 meant that political 'moderation' was an increasingly suspect term, and soon came to be synonymous, in the eyes of radicals, with 'counter- revolution'. Along with Desmoulins, **Georges-Jacques Danton** (**1759–94**), Minister of Justice from 12 August to 9 October 1792, was a member of the Jacobins but increasingly called for a moderation from the excesses of the radicals; attacked by Robespierre as an 'Indulgent', he was tried and executed along with a number of colleagues on 5 April 1794.

The majority of remaining names are also of members of the Jacobin club, but members who survived up to the summer of 1794, and in some cases beyond. A large number were members of the 'Committee of Public Safety', one of a number of executive committees which were created in April 1793, and were in many respects the true basis of strong government in France after Terror was declared 'the order of the day' on 5 September 1793. Among its members were **Bertrand Barère** (**1755–1841**), originally a moderate but increasingly sympathetic to the political left; he had been a member of the 'Society of 1789' along with Chénier, but subsequently joined the Jacobins. Chénier's references to Barère in several of his own (later) poems (the *Iambs*) show his

hostility for his 'stupid nonsense', his 'windbag' oratory; in the opera he is also invoked at the beginning of Act III in a telling passage, which sketches well the dual background to Terror: military failure abroad (note the references to the deserter Dumouriez, to foreign princes [Saxe-]Cobourg and Brunswick and to British premier Pitt) and counter-revolution at home (in the Vendée and Brittany). These factors explain the catchphrase actually declared in July 1792: 'La patrie en danger', here attributed to Barère, and the consequent call for patriotic donations. Among radicals, we also see **Georges-Auguste Couthon** (**1755–94**), the wheelchair-bound lawyer from Clermont- Ferrand who served the Convention on mission until his election to the Committee of Public Safety in May 1793. A close ally of Robespierre, he was centrally responsible for the drawing-up of the law of 22 Prairial, enacted on 10 June 1794, which simplified legal process to extend the reach of the Revolutionary Tribunal, limit the capacities of the accused to defend themselves and radically broaden the scope of who could be brought to trial: it was a crucial piece of the legal machinery of the Terror, well reflected in the trial of Chénier himself in Act III. **Louis-Antoine de Saint-Just** (**1767–94**) was only 25 when he made his earliest speeches in the Convention concerning the King's trial. 'One cannot reign innocently' is the quotation often used to entitle his most important speech, which argued that Louis XVI was a traitor to the French people by virtue of his very position as a monarch. Saint-Just was also one of the drafters of the 1793 Constitution, and was central in drawing up attacks against Danton and his colleagues in Spring 1794. A close supporter of Robespierre, he was later to be executed alongside him in July 1794, with his colleague **Philippe-François-Joseph Le Bas** (**1765–94**).

As for **Maximilien François Marie Isidore de Robespierre** (**1758–94**), his role in the opera is small, but his influence is considerable. The spy (L'Incredibile) in Act II and his like are described in dialogue with Bersi (in a phrase often uttered by Robespierre himself) as 'observers of the public spirit'. This absurd euphemism contributes to the paranoid claustrophobia of the Revolutionary Paris described in the opera, as does the unbending rigour and inhumanity of the legal process, so manifestly flawed that guilt can be concluded in the absence of due process or evidence. It feels somehow fitting that the 'incorruptible' Robespierre should never speak, as a kind of empty centre to the work as a whole, despite last-ditch plans by Gérard to appeal to him for justice 'once more' towards the end of Act III.

One remaining important name from the Committee of Public Safety is **Jean-Marie Collot d'Herbois** (**1749–96**), a playwright and theatre director from Lyons turned radical Jacobin, who drew Chénier's animosity for brutal repression of counter-revolutionary activity in Lyons, but more importantly in proposing amnesty for the Swiss mercenaries of the Châteauvieux regiment, who in 1790 had mutinied and killed their officers. This amnesty, a piece of political propaganda by the Jacobins, inspired several of Chénier's most outspoken articles and one outstanding satirical poem (describing the mercenaries as 'Robespierre's cherished murderers'), published in 1792 and key in his subsequent arrest and trial. But Chénier's greatest hostility was perhaps for **Jean-Paul Marat** (**1743–93**), the erstwhile physician who embraced radical politics and edited *The Friend of the People* over

around seven hundred issues, from September 1789 to his death in July 1793, and whose bust is seen on an altar at the beginning of Act II. Marat's assassination by royalist Charlotte Corday is best remembered thanks to Jacques-Louis David's rendering, with its *pietà*-style composition and the serenity of its subject. Chénier himself references the assassination in his *Ode to Charlotte Corday*, with its ironic references to the 'impudent reptile from the mire of Parnassus' in a 13-stanza poem full of reptilian and animalistic imagery, which argues against the ceremonies and other cultural celebrations aiming to immortalize Marat as a martyr of the Revolution.

Such radicalism went hand-in-hand with Revolutionary justice: the Revolutionary tribunal, created in March 1793, counted among its earlist members **Antoine-Quentin Fouquier-Tinville** (**1746–95**), who would go on to be public prosecutor. Chénier's *Iambs* describe him as a 'deadly accuser, a clerk of carnage'; though he has a small singing role in the opera, the conduct of Act III's trial is well summarized by his line: 'I cannot allow you to speak, we are in a hurry.' Fouquier-Tinville tried unsuccessfully to defend his zeal as prosecutor in the years of the Terror by claiming to have 'followed orders'; he was tried and executed in 1795, during the Thermidorian reaction.

It is perhaps not by accident that Giordano's librettist Illica includes within his list four individuals who, increasingly threatened by Robespierre's numerous purges, plotted the Thermidor coup, and thereby managed to outlive him. Among them is **Paul-François-Jean-Nicolas Barras** (**1755–1829**), a correspondent of the Convention on missions outside of Paris, responsible for brutal repression of counter-revolutionary activity in Marseilles and the capture of Toulon, besieged by the British in early 1794; the libretto refers to his love of pleasure, of drinking and gambling, perhaps as a reference to his reputation for corruption. Another such plotter is **Jean-Lambert Tallien** (**1767–1820**), described in the libretto as an 'enigma': a prominent member of the insurrectionary commune and later of the Convention, attacked by Robespierre in 1794. **Joseph Fouché** (**1759–1820**) was also on mission until his recall to Paris in April 1794. He was central to Revolutionary policies of 'dechristianization' and an organizer with Collot d'Herbois of the firing-squads (*mitraillades*) of counter- revolutionaries in Lyons. Finally, **Jacques-Alexis Thuriot** (**1753–1829**) was a member both of the Committee of Public Safety and the Convention, also frequently on mission but back in Paris and president of the Convention during Robespierre's overthrow.

The fall of Robespierre on 9 Thermidor (27 July 1794) is perhaps the best illustration of how the Revolution could turn upon its own, and of how individuals could so easily find themselves on the wrong side of an ideological or power boundary. As Chénier's rival-turned-defender Gérard puts it after hearing the accusation against Andrea in Act III: 'Ah, la Rivoluzione i figli suoi divora!' (Ah! The Revolution is devouring its own children).

—Mark Darlow is Professor of French at the University of Cambridge. He is author of *Staging the French Revolution: Cultural Politics and the Paris Opéra, 1789-1794* (Oxford University Press, 2012) among other books.

UMBERTO GIORDANO AND ANDREA CHÉNIER

George Hall

The long and immensely distinguished stage career of Giuseppe Verdi would come to an end with the premiere of *Falstaff* at La Scala, Milan, in February 1893. But already jockeying for position to replace him was a group of ambitious composers known collectively as the *giovane scuola* – the 'young school' of Italian opera, destined to take it on to the next stage of its history.

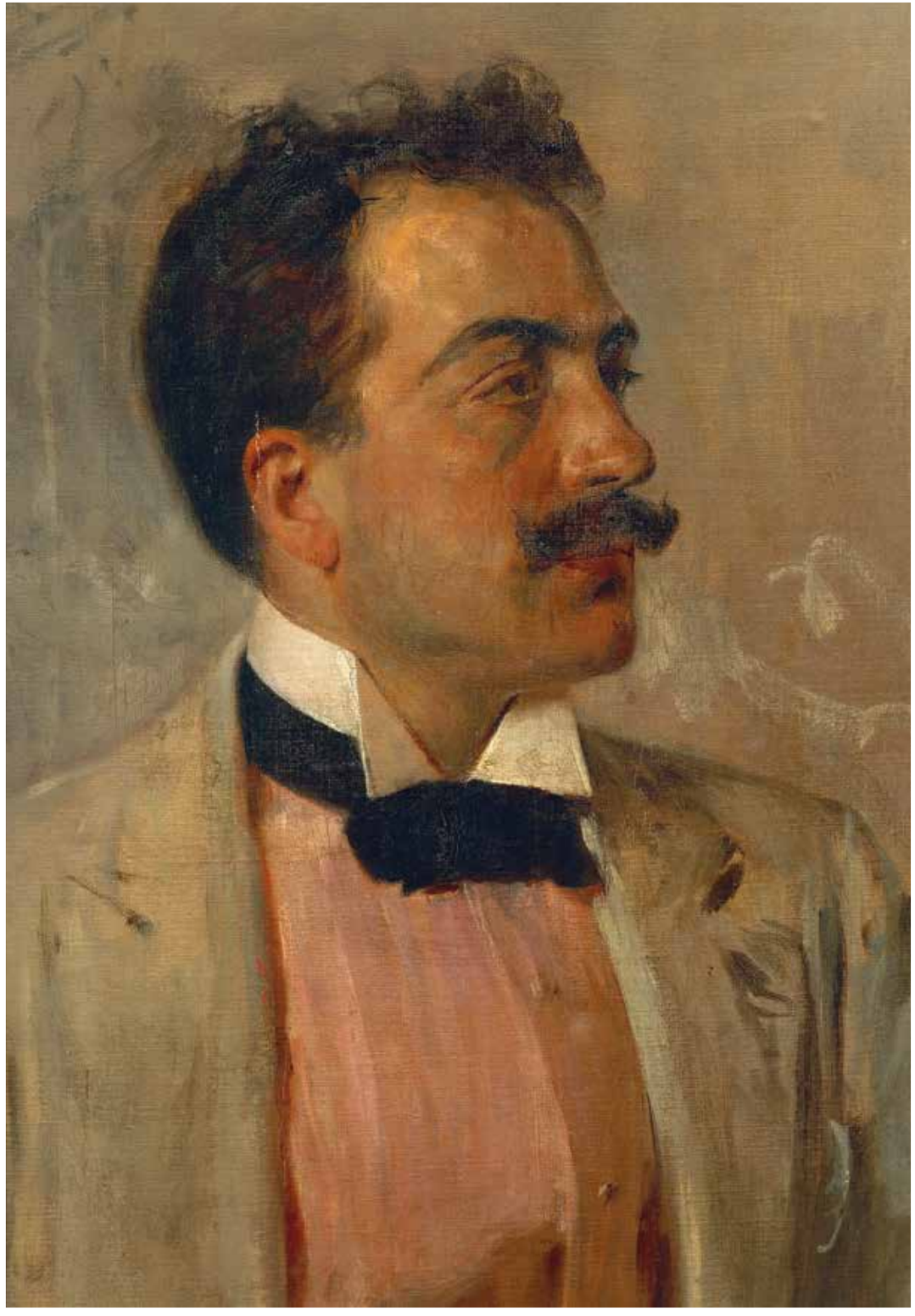
Giacomo Puccini was prominent among them, but he had several important rivals: Alfredo Catalani (who died tragically young in August 1893), Pietro Mascagni, Francesco Cilea and Ruggero Leoncavallo among them. Coming up on the inside track was another relative newcomer – Umberto Giordano.

Giordano was born in the southern Italian town of Foggia in the region of Puglia on 28 August 1867. His father was a pharmacist, who opposed his son's musical career; nevertheless his musical talent was recognized and in 1882 Giordano was sent to study at the Naples Conservatory, which over centuries had produced generations of distinguished musicians – many of them successful opera composers.

His chance to join their number came in 1889, when he sent his one-act *Marina* in to the judges of a competition organized by the publisher Edoardo Sonzogno (1836–1920), which had been inaugurated six years earlier in order to discover new operatic talent. Although its composer was the youngest entrant, Giordano's work came sixth out of 73 entries – the ultimate prize-winner being *Cavalleria rusticana* by Pietro Mascagni, who became famous overnight when his first opera created an extraordinary impression on audiences in Rome in 1890, launching the *verismo* (or 'realist') movement in opera at a stroke.

But Sonzogno was impressed with Giordano's talent, and commissioned from him another work, unveiled at the Teatro Argentina in Rome on 21 February 1892 as *Mala vita* – a gritty slice of Neapolitan life under the shadow of the local Mafia (the Camorra), based on a novel by Salvatore Di Giacomo and with a libretto by Nicola Daspuro. (*Mala vita* was revived at Wexford Festival in 2018.)

At this period the publishing house of Sonzogno was consciously seeking to challenge the long-established rival firm run by Giulio Ricordi for a dominant position in Italian operatic life. Sonzogno's business had, in fact, been founded by his grandfather at the end of the 18th century. Edoardo himself began to specialize in music in 1874, and he soon acquired the Italian rights to a number of successful foreign works – notably Bizet's *Carmen* and Ambroise Thomas' *Mignon*. His first competition for a one-act work was held in 1883, but it was the 1889 edition that would significantly change the face of Italian opera. Thereafter Sonzogno took it upon himself to promote the operas of a whole group of composers



Portrait of Umberto Giordano (1867–1948): oil on canvas by Italian school (20th century) © Conservatorio di Musica San Pietro a Majella/De Agostini Picture Library/A. Dagli Orti/Bridgeman Images

Lina Cavalieri (1874–1944) as the title role in Umberto Giordano's *Fedora*

not already signed up to Ricordi, who had Puccini and Alfredo Catalani on his books: as well as Giordano and Mascagni, Sonzogno took up Cilea and Leoncavallo (whose 1892 *Pagliacci* had been a self-conscious and entirely successful follow-up to *Cavalleria rusticana*), presenting their works in seasons abroad as well as in Italy. As both owner and director of the Italian newspaper *Il secolo* from 1861 to 1909, he was able to publicize their works widely, also establishing the Teatro Lirico Internazionale in Milan in 1894 as a venue to stage them. Sonzogno also published an important promotional theatrical magazine, *Il teatro illustrato*, for more than a decade. Giordano's *Mala vita*, meanwhile, attracted some attention – not all of it positive.

While it was a major success in Vienna, where it was praised by the experienced critic Eduard Hanslick, in Naples, where the opera was set, it caused a scandal, and had to be taken off following a single performance. The plot concerns a dyer, suffering from tuberculosis, who makes a vow to redeem a sex worker by marrying her if he is cured. It was considered strong meat at the time; in 1897 Giordano revised and relaunched it under the title *Il voto* (The Vow).

Despite the work's mixed reception, Sonzogno nevertheless held on to Giordano, offering him a monthly stipend to allow him to compose his third opera, *Regina Diaz*, to a libretto by Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti and Guido Menasci – the librettists of *Cavalleria rusticana*. This was a curious attempt for its period to re-create the type of melodrama that had provided Donizetti's audiences with instant thrills – indeed its plot draws on an identical source to the earlier composer's *Maria di Rohan* of 1843; but it achieved only two performances on its launch at the Teatro Mercadante in Naples on 5 March 1894 and little has been heard of it since.

At this point Sonzogno's faith in Giordano seems to have wavered – publishers, after all, are running commercial enterprises, and he was doubtless hoping for some return on the investment he had already made in the young man. The independently wealthy composer Alberto Franchetti, meanwhile, argued for the continuance of Giordano's grant, handing over to him the prose scenario of a libretto he had initially been intending to set to music himself – that of *Andrea Chénier*. This event would mark a change in Giordano's fortunes, as would his marriage, shortly after the opera's New York premiere, to Olga Spatz-Wurms, whose family owned an important Milanese hotel.

On its own account *Chénier* had a lot going for it. The French Revolutionary subject of this *dramma istorico* took the life and death of a real poet, André Chénier (1762–94), as its subject. This gave it a basis in reality that has seen it marked as a product of the fashionable *verismo* movement. The libretto was by Luigi Illica, one of the leading practitioners of the art at that time, who worked (in collaboration with Giuseppe Giacosa) on Puccini's *La bohème* (1896), *Tosca* (1900) and *Madama Butterfly* (1904), in addition to (on his own) such other notable works of the period as Catalani's *La Wally* and Alberto Franchetti's *Cristoforo Colombo* (both 1892), as well as Mascagni's *Iris* (1898) and *Isabeau* (1911).

Giordano also conceived the title role of the opera as a vehicle for a star tenor. Not long before the first performance, which took place at the Teatro alla Scala, Milan, on 28 March 1896, Alfonso Garulli withdrew from the production, to be replaced in his debut appearance at the theatre by Giuseppe Borgatti, who would go on to become Italy's most notable Wagnerian tenor for the next twenty years or so. Also appearing in the cast were Evelina Carrera (Maddalena di Coigny) and the leading baritone Mario Sammarco (Carlo Gérard); Rodolfo Ferrari conducted.

On the opening night, Gérard's opening bitter attack on the *ancien régime* won an ovation. Borgatti's singing of the *Improvviso*, 'Un dì, all'azzurro spazio', was encored, and the sense of triumph continued all evening. Giordano was able to wire his parents with the words 'TOTAL SUCCESS'; to the absent Illica, 'BEG YOU COME SHARE JOY AND SUCCESS'; and to his close friend and supporter Mascagni – who had predicted the outcome – the single word 'PROPHET'. Meanwhile, Sonzogno cabled to Illica: 'FIRST, THIRD AND FOURTH ACTS COMPLETE TRIUMPH. SECOND ALSO WELL RECEIVED. TWENTY CALLS ARTISTS AND COMPOSER.'

Chénier was a major hit. Over the next few years it would be enthusiastically taken up internationally, including in New York (1896), Breslau, Hamburg, Budapest, Moscow, Prague, Buenos Aires and Lyons (1897) and Lisbon, Alexandria, Antwerp, Rio de Janeiro, Barcelona and Berlin (1898).

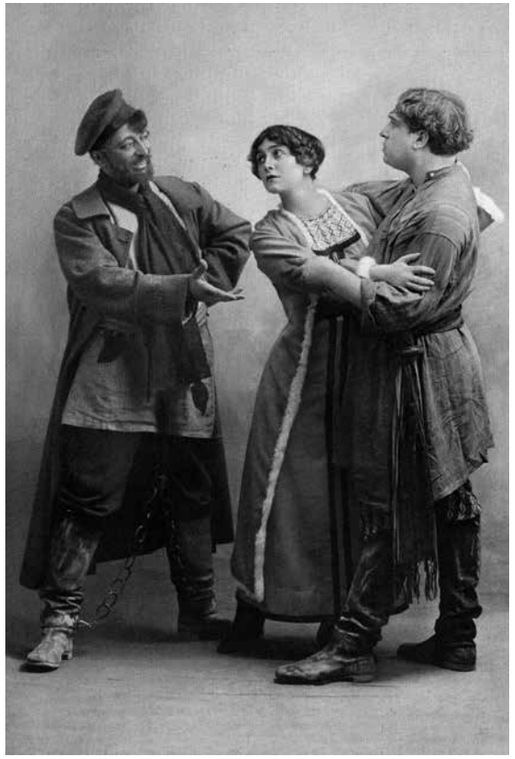
Manchester heard it in English in 1903, followed by performances at the Camden Theatre in London that same year, while Covent Garden audiences welcomed it in 1905; and it would go one to become a permanent feature of the international repertory.

Two years later, at the Teatro Lirico in Milan on 17 November 1898, Giordano would follow *Andrea Chénier* with the almost equally successful *Fedora* – another work that has stayed the course internationally. Based, like *Tosca*, which it preceded by two years, on a highly successful play by the then fashionable French playwright Victorien Sardou, it told the contemporary story of a Russian princess who inveigles herself into the affections of a man whom she believes has murdered her fiancé, falling in love with him in the process.

With Enrico Caruso as Loris and the leading *verismo* diva Gemma Bellincioni in the title role, *Fedora* won immediate success in Milan, and subsequently at many major and minor theatres worldwide; Vienna heard it in 1900, Berlin in 1903, Paris in 1905, and Covent Garden in London and the Metropolitan Opera in New York both in 1906.

None of Giordano's later operas quite matched these two successes, though several of them are genuinely interesting works and some of them are still occasionally revived, mostly in Italy or at festivals specializing in rarities. His next opera after *Fedora* was *Siberia*, once again setting a libretto by Illica with a contemporary Russian scenario, and given a high profile launch at La Scala in 1903 with a number of important follow-up productions in many Italian and foreign cities; Giordano revised it in 1927. In it, the heroine, mistress of an army officer who has wounded a princely rival in a duel, follows her beloved to the Siberian prison camp where he is held. The lovers attempt to escape only for her to be shot as they try to do so.

Bellincioni returned to Milan to star, alongside tenor Fernando de Lucia, in the premiere of *Marcella* at the Teatro Lirico on 9 November 1907. The work has a contemporary setting in Paris and describes a relationship that fails to cross the class barriers of the period. The heroine meets a young man purporting to be an artist and poet, but he is in reality a prince. When he leaves to try to quell a rebellion in his homeland, she realizes that she is not able to marry him, due to her lowly status, and kills herself.



Giordano's *Siberia*, with Lina Cavalieri, Lucien Muratore and Henri Dangès, photograph of Paris Opera production (1911), reproduced in Le Théâtre © Lebrecht Music and Arts/Bridgeman Images

An unusual work in Giordano's output, *Mese Mariano* (Mary's Month) was a one-act opera, introduced in Palermo on 17 March 1910 and just 35 minutes in length. The setting and subject seem likely to have influenced the now better known *Suor Angelica* of Puccini. Salvatore Di Giacomo's libretto (based on his own novel) tells the moving story of a woman who visits an orphanage to see the illegitimate son she has been forced to abandon because her new husband will not have the child of another man in his house: she leaves without fulfilling her mission because the nuns find it impossible to tell her that her child has died. Giordano's next opera, *Madame Sans-Gêne* (Metropolitan Opera, New York, 25 January 1915) marked a change of pace and mood. It was his first comedy, again based on a play by Sardou (this time in collaboration with Emile Moreau) and designed as a vehicle for opera star Geraldine Farrar, who initially appeared alongside Giovanni Martinelli and Pasquale Amato. The latter played Napoleon, seen as a young officer during the French Revolution and then as the all-powerful Emperor of 1811; his antagonist is a laundress whom he patronizes as a young man and later re-encounters transformed into the Duchess of Danzig. The work was revived in the 1990s as a vehicle for Mirella Freni.

The plot of *Madame Sans-Gêne* clearly contains elements of operetta, which was the genre of the next piece with which Giordano appeared as a composer for the stage. This was *Giove a Pompei* (Jove in Pompeii), staged at the open-air Teatro La Pariola in Rome on 5 July 1921 – though in fact it had much older origins. Italian composers had taken relatively slowly to operetta, whose mix of song and speech they and their audiences had never found particularly satisfactory – at least from a theoretical point of view. *Giove a Pompei* went back to a libretto written by Illica in 1899 and reworked following his death in 1919 by Emilio Romagnoli.

Giordano also had a musical partner in the piece in the shape of his old friend Franchetti; most of his own musical contribution had been completed by 1901. The story tells how Jove finds the inhabitants of Pompeii disrespectful of the gods and ill-prepared to save themselves from the horrors of the eruption of Vesuvius, which they initially regard as a spectacle. The operetta's initial run proved highly successful.

Giordano's next stage work, *La cena delle beffe* (The Jesters' Supper) is often considered one of his most fascinating. Its libretto by Sem Benelli (who had earlier given the composer Italo Montemezzi a durable hit with the libretto for his 1913 opera *L'amore di tre re*, also based on one of Benelli's plays) was drawn on his 1909 drama set in Florence during the reign of Lorenzo the Magnificent. It deals with cruelty, murder and madness amid the rivalry between two Florentine nobles over a woman. Toscanini conducted the premiere at La Scala on 20 December 1924. When revived, as it was at La Scala in 2016, *La cena delle beffe* has generally struck audiences as one of its composer's most powerful creations.

Giordano's final opera was the one-act comedy *Il re* (The King), conceived to a libretto by Giovacchino Forzano as a vehicle for the coloratura soprano Toti dal Monte. It had its premiere at La Scala, once again under Toscanini, on 12 January 1929. Its 18th-century setting is the background to a plot wherein the miller's daughter Rosalina decides that she is destined to marry the King, only to discover that he is a wizened old man; she therefore returns, with the king's blessing, to her regular betrothed, Colombello. By the time of the opera's premiere Giordano was 61 years old, and he completed no further works for the stage, though he lived until the age of 81, dying on 12 November 1948.

For the wider operatic public, Giordano's legacy effectively consists of his two durable successes, *Andrea Chénier* and *Fedora*, but those encountering some of his rarer pieces – either in full-scale productions or on CD – will undoubtedly find them worthwhile.

—George Hall writes widely on classical music and opera for *The Stage*, *Opera*, *Opera Now* and *BBC Music Magazine*. He has contributed to the *Oxford Companion to Music*, *The Penguin Opera Guide* and *Overture Guides* dedicated to *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Carmen*, *Rigoletto* and *Simon Boccanegra*.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

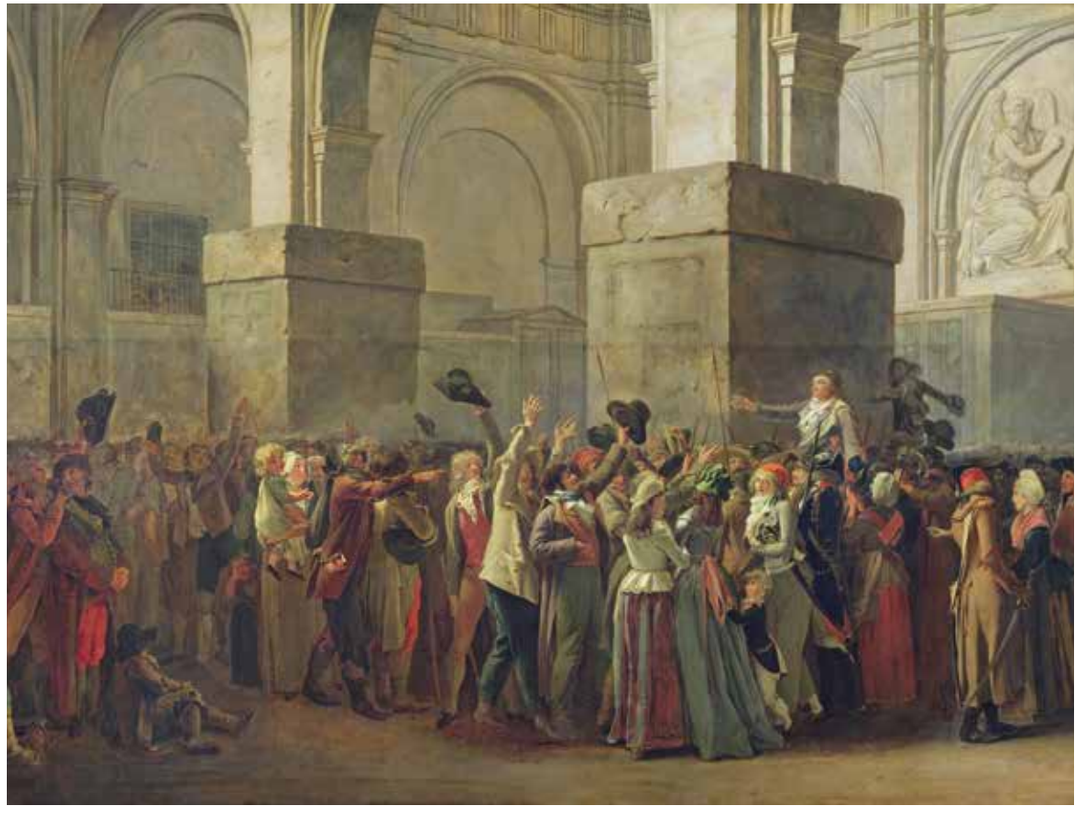
William Doyle

In the summer of 1788 the French government collapsed. Eighteen months beforehand a black hole had been revealed in its accounts, as loans incurred in the American War of Independence a decade earlier fell due. Controversial plans to meet the deficit by administrative reforms and new taxes provoked fierce resistance, culminating in demands for King Louis XVI to meet the crisis by convening national representatives in the Estates-General, a body which had not met for 175 years. Finally facing bankruptcy, the king called elections for the spring of 1789. As part of the electoral process, his subjects were encouraged to voice their discontents in lists of instructions (*cahiers*) to those they elected. Coming at a time of serious economic difficulty, with widespread unemployment and rising bread prices, this promise of change raised massive expectations for reform in all areas of national life.

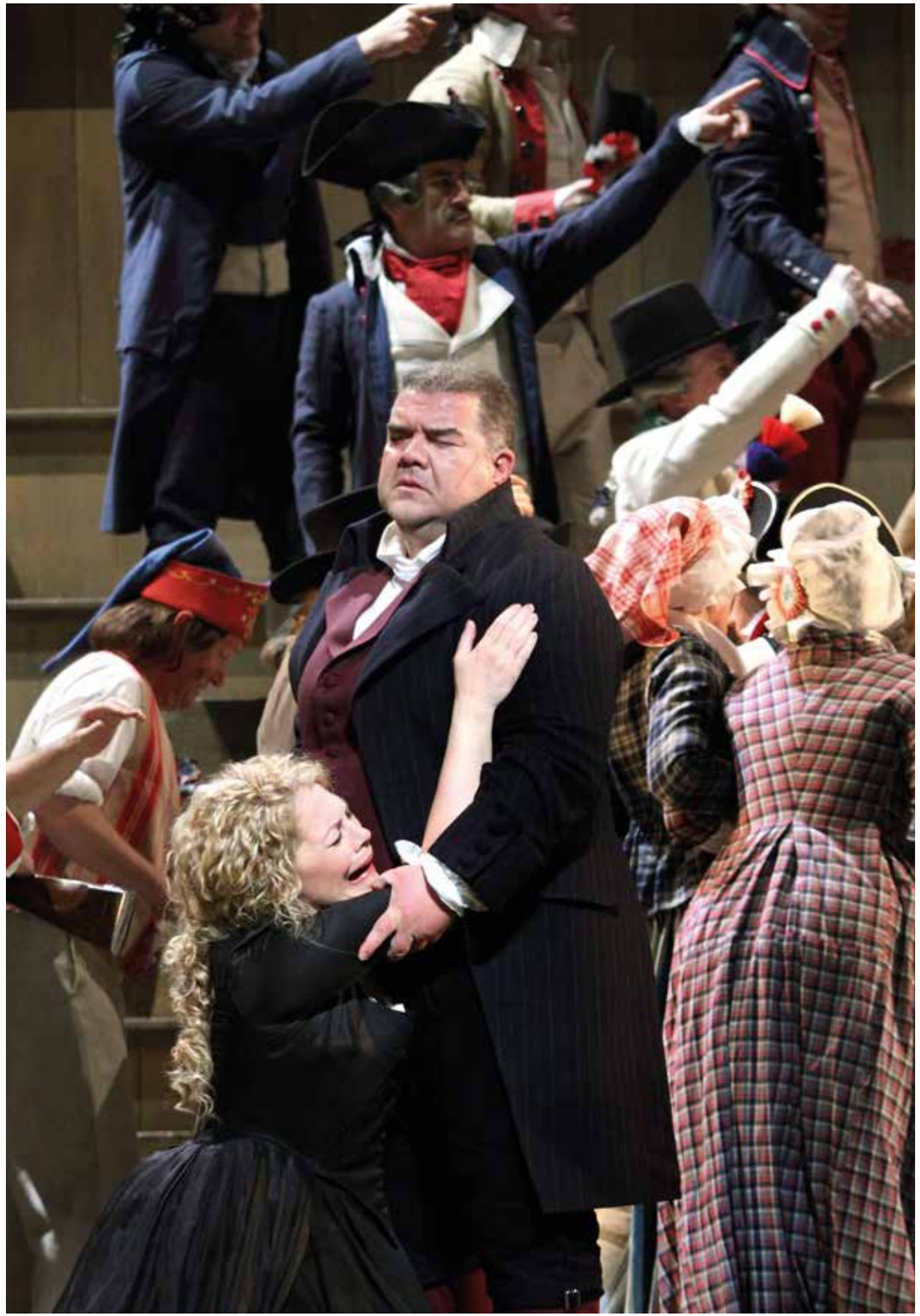
But the traditional form of the Estates-General gave the ruling orders (the nobility and the clergy) a built-in voting advantage and thereby the ability to block anything that threatened their interests. It became clear during the elections that most noblemen were determined to preserve these advantages, and when the assembly met in May the representatives of the nobility refused all concessions. The king did nothing to compel them. Only after six weeks of stalemate did the deputies of the Third Estate, representing the remaining 99 per cent of the French population, lose patience and unilaterally declare themselves the National Assembly. This, 17 June 1789, was the first revolutionary moment, when sovereignty in France passed from the monarch to the Nation. A few days later, in the famous Tennis Court Oath, the revolutionary deputies vowed never to disperse until they had given France a constitution.

Initially it looked as if the king and the nobility had grudgingly accepted these claims. But when troops began to converge on Paris in the following weeks fear spread that an attempt would be made to dissolve the new Assembly by force. The determination of Parisians to defend it led on 14 July to the storming of the Bastille, the grim state prison overlooking the poor east end of the city. The troops were pulled back. The people of Paris had saved the Revolution.

The National Assembly now set about meeting the country's expectations by establishing a constitutional monarchy, elective representative government and a guaranteed range of civil rights. It also launched social reforms whose main victims were the nobility. The determination of most



The Triumph of Marat: oil on paper mounted on canvas (late 18th century) by Louis-Léopold Boilly (1761–1845) © Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille/Bridgeman Images



Sondra Radvanovsky and Dimitri Platanias, *Andrea Chénier* © 2019 ROH.
Photographed by Catherine Ashmore

Years of accumulated resentment at the overbearing behaviour of 'aristocrats' now rose to the surface, as the Revolution progressively became, as one contemporary put it, 'Everybody's revenge'.

nobles over the spring to retain their privileges had made them hugely unpopular, and when their leaders began to emigrate after the fall of the Bastille suspicion deepened that they remained unreconciled to the new order. In August nobles were stripped of their traditional privileges and a Declaration of Rights proclaimed that liberty and equality would henceforth be the guiding principles of the French Nation. The following year nobility itself was abolished, and the flow of nobles emigrating increased. Eventually the properties of absent nobles were confiscated. Years of accumulated resentment at the overbearing behaviour of 'aristocrats' now rose to the surface, as the Revolution progressively became, as one contemporary put it, 'Everybody's revenge'.

These resentments only increased when, in June 1791, the king himself tried to escape with his family, but was recaptured after the 'Flight to Varennes'. Almost overnight, Paris became republican. Afraid of having pushed revolution too far, the National Assembly sought to conciliate Louis XVI; but foreign monarchs, urged on by French nobles who had emigrated, had begun to issue threats against the new regime. In a mood of patriotic defiance, symbolized by a new national battle hymn, the *Marseillaise*, and the wearing of red caps of liberty, like freed slaves in ancient times, France declared war against the Austrian Emperor in April 1792. It began disastrously, and it was immediately suspected that the royal family were in secret contact with the enemy: Queen Marie-Antoinette was, after all, an Austrian princess. She and the king were mobbed in the palace by crowds of self-styled *sans-culottes* (wearers of working clothes, signifying poor people). André Chénier, unknown as a poet but an opinionated journalist, denounced this episode, less as a royalist than as a critic of mob rule; but on 10 August the palace was taken by storm and the monarchy overthrown with considerable bloodshed. A few weeks later in early September, as enemy forces marched towards Paris, hundreds of counter- revolutionary suspects were massacred in their prisons by angry and fearful crowds.

Until now the Revolution, though turbulent, had been relatively bloodless. Henceforth, it would be forever associated with mass murder, and the new mechanical decapitator, the guillotine, which flooded the streets with blood. Its most famous victim would be Louis XVI himself, executed in January 1793 for crimes against the Nation, after a show trial conducted by the new national representative body, the Convention.

In September 1792 the invaders were turned back at the battle of Valmy, and for six months the French went on to the offensive. Belgium, western Germany and Alpine neighbours were invaded by armies offering 'Fraternity and Help' to all peoples wishing to recover their liberty, with the anti-aristocratic slogan 'war on the castles, peace to the cottages'. In response, Britain, Holland and Spain joined an alliance against the regicide republic, and its expansion ground to a halt. In Paris, the government was immobilized by conflict in the Convention between rival factions of so-called Girondins and Jacobins, the former condemning the intimidating influence of a bloodthirsty Parisian populace, the latter defending it. It was only

resolved in June 1793 when the *sans-culottes* forced the expulsion of the Girondin leaders, who some months later were executed. But this forced purging of the Nation's elected representatives created outrage in several of the great provincial cities, who came out in what the beleaguered Jacobins called the 'Federalist Revolt'. Coinciding with an uprising of royalist peasants in the western region of the Vendée, it was more like a civil war between Paris and the provinces, but in time of war rebellion was nothing less than treason. The crisis reached its peak in early September 1793, when news arrived that Toulon, the great Mediterranean naval port, had surrendered to the British. Once more the *sans-culottes* mobbed the Convention, demanding that, in order to overcome the republic's enemies, Terror should be made the order of the day. The Convention had little option but to comply. A Revolutionary Tribunal was already in existence to try political crimes, and government was in the hands of the Convention's Committee of Public Safety, whose most prominent member was the 'incorruptible' Robespierre.

Under this 'revolutionary government', normal rules of civil and political life were suspended until peace was made. The economy was tightly controlled, organized religion (identified as one of the driving forces of counter-revolution) was persecuted and a new republican calendar was introduced. Egalitarian style was promoted, enforcing familiar forms of address – *Citoyen* (citizen) rather than *Monsieur* or *Madame* – and informal dress. Above all there was a brutal crackdown on all opposition. Freedom of the press disappeared. A Law of Suspects allowed anybody to be arrested and imprisoned without trial, and more than 400,000 were. Chénier, though inactive since the previous summer, was arrested under this law in March 1794. Over the preceding autumn the provincial rebellions were gradually brought under control, and savage reprisals followed. Before the Terror ended in July 1794 more than 16,000 death sentences had been handed down by revolutionary courts, and at least as many victims again had probably been dispatched in unrecorded ways. Thousands more had died in prison. Most perished in the provincial centres of revolt, but in the spring of 1794 an attempt was made to bring the Terror under closer control by concentrating trials in Paris. The result was the so-called 'Great' Terror, when in four months the Paris Revolutionary Tribunal, and its implacable public prosecutor Fouquier-Tinville, sent 2,177 victims, including André Chénier, to the guillotine. In a desperate effort to clear overcrowded prisons, victims were given increasingly summary trials, with no defence counsel; and although, contrary to legend, only a minority were former nobles, there was a clear increase in their number, now under suspicion as much for what they had been as for what they had done. In later weeks the guillotine was moved from the centre of Paris to the outskirts, to counter growing disgust at the seemingly endless slaughter – and it was here that Chénier died, only days before the Terror came to an end.

Nobody had planned the Terror, but nobody knew how to end it. To denounce it was to risk accusations of counter-revolution, and fall victim to it oneself, like Danton and his friends in April 1794. Arguably Terror had saved the republic from its enemies, but it was now secure internally, and in the war French arms were once more proving victorious. Terror seemed to have done its work. So, when late in July (Thermidor in the new republican calendar) Robespierre claimed that more unspecified traitors needed to be culled, there was a revolt among fellow deputies, afraid that he meant them. Robespierre was shouted down in the Convention and declared an outlaw. On 27 July he in his turn went to the guillotine, and his downfall was made the pretext for ending the Terror.

It was not the end of the Revolution. None of the basic problems which it had thrown up had been resolved. France remained at war for another eight years, and it took the same length of time to settle its quarrel with the Catholic Church. Nor could a stable republican government be found, capable of safeguarding the Revolution's reforms and achievements without the danger of lapsing back into Terror to prevent the return of monarchy. The downfall of Robespierre nearly ended the career of a promising young officer whose had successfully planned the recovery of Toulon from its British invaders. But Napoleon Bonaparte survived a brief imprisonment, and six years later it would be he who finally brought the Revolution to an end, and established the stability it had never managed to achieve.

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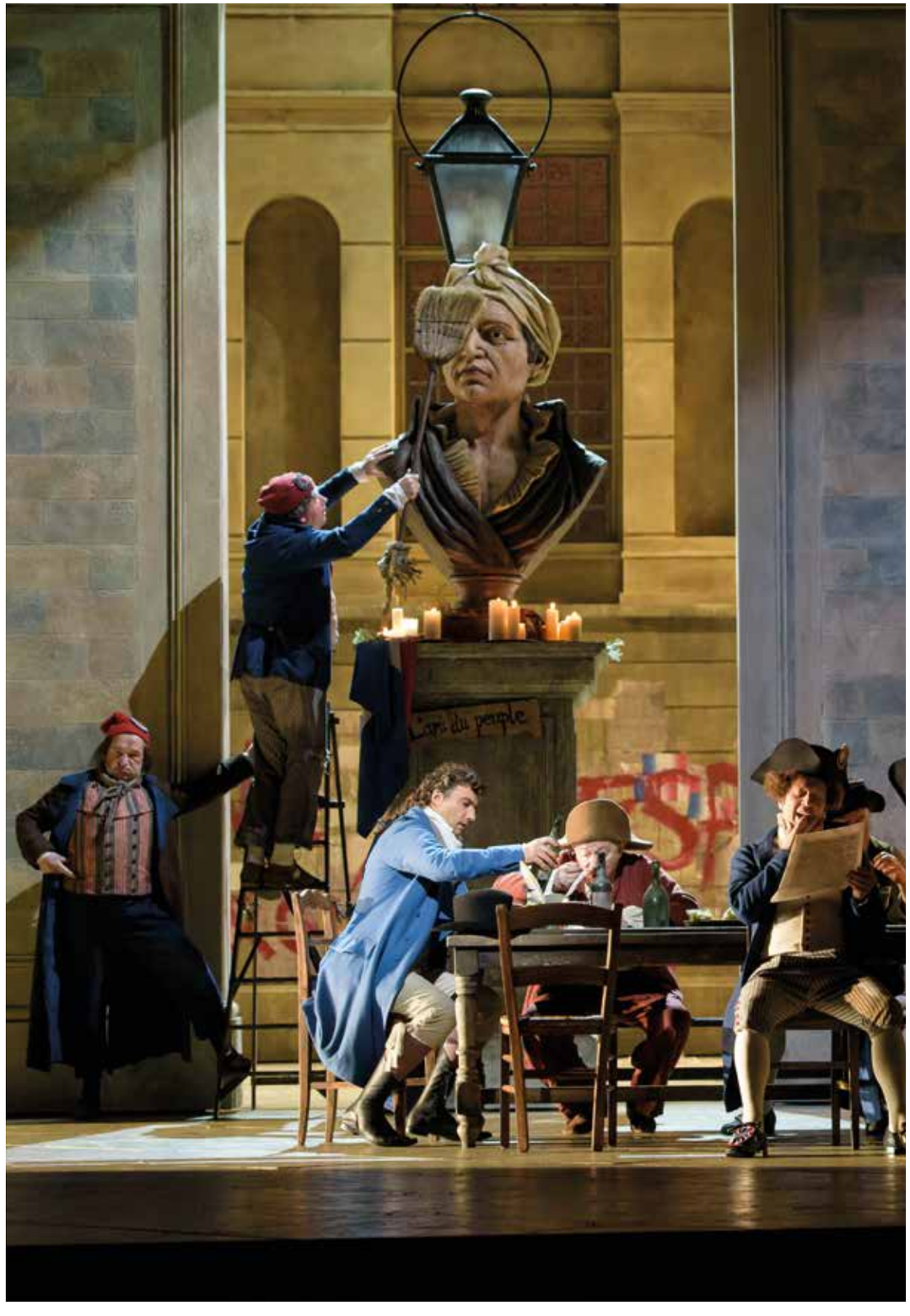
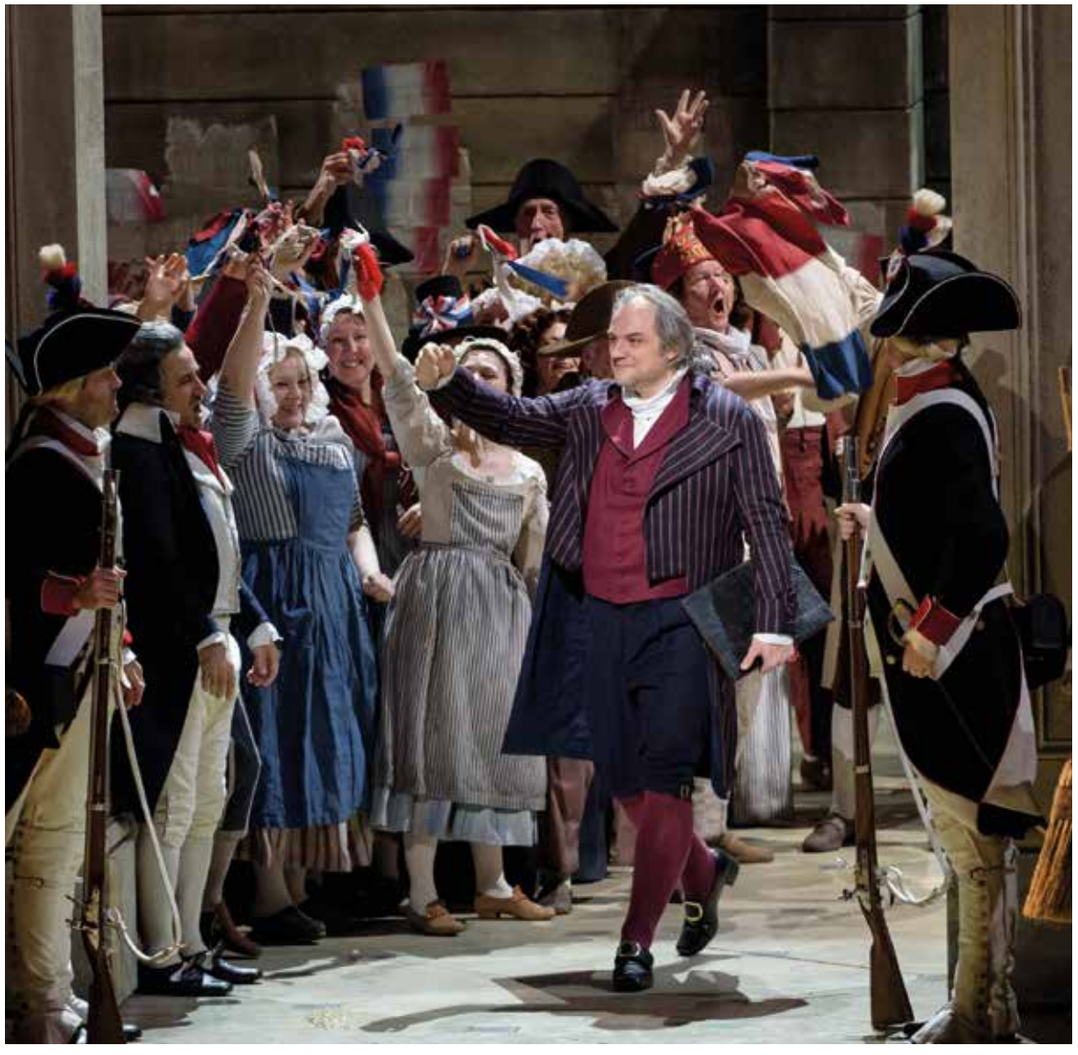


Jonas Kaufmann, *Andrea Chénier* © 2015 ROH. Photographed by Bill Cooper

BACKGROUND AND FOREGROUND

John Snelson



Željko Lučić, *Andrea Chénier* © 2019 ROH. Photographed by Catherine Ashmore

Given the balance of the operatic repertory, it is maybe inevitable that we appreciate *Andrea Chénier* in part through the perspective given by another composer: Puccini, Giordano's contemporary. The two composers are products of the same country, age and influences, so it is no surprise that they share approaches to opera aesthetics. Some particular moments in *Andrea Chénier* suggest these parallels. The explosive dynamism of the start of Act I matches that of the openings of *Manon Lescaut* (1893) and *La bohème* (1896, which had its premiere a few days after Giordano finished composing *Andrea Chénier* and a matter of weeks before *Chénier*'s premiere). The gavotte and pastoral ensemble of *Andrea Chénier*'s Act I recall the 18th-century period references of song and dance in Act II of *Manon Lescaut*. The story of two lovers threatened by a politically powerful enemy driven by lust is one of the parallels with the later *Tosca* (1900). The bustle of crowds in a public space is common to the second acts of *La bohème* and *Andrea Chénier*, with a suitable public procession in each – a marching band in the former, a parade of Revolutionary dignitaries in the latter.

One librettist worked on all of these operas: Luigi Illica. For Puccini, Illica collaborated with Giuseppe Giacosa who acted as a cushioning force between 'the volcanic Illica, the uncertainties of Puccini and the impatience of the publisher' (as Puccini's publisher Ricordi described it after Giacosa's death). For Giordano, Illica was sole librettist, and put into the dramatic structure a characteristic attention to detail that establishes a specific place and time. This particular strength of Illica's approach was picked up by Giordano as one of the layers of musical evocation that he uses throughout the opera. In effect, the French Revolution becomes a dominating character of the opera in a way that Scarpia's Rome in *Tosca* does not.

Giordano responded by working into the score musical detail and colour to match the historical references in the text. As direct quotation, there is *La Carmagnole*, a popular song of the Revolution from about 1792, adapted through the addition of new words from a peasant dance tune. Giordano gives a couple of snatches of this to Mathieu in Act II as he leaves after the patrols have passed by. The full version, sung in the distance, comes in Act III, and its placing there has a significance we will come to shortly. More familiar to us is the *Marseillaise*, also from 1792 (composed by Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle). Giordano includes a nod to its iconic status through the inclusion of its final phrase in his own anthemic hymn in Act II, as Robespierre and the other Revolutionary leaders parade past to the acclamation of the crowd; we hear the *Marseillaise* melody in its own right in Act IV, sung offstage by Mathieu. Both quotations characterize through sound the Revolutionary cause, and both are presented as part of the aural backdrop to the drama. Other sounds of the real world come in the forms we are familiar with from other *verismo* works – notably here with drums: accompanying the beggars' intrusive parade in Act I, the patrols in Act II and the crowd outside the Revolutionary Tribunal in Act III.

Illica also builds the historical dimension closely into the narrative structure, drawing on his skill in combining large-scale action with advancement of plot into extended dramatic sequences. Giordano picks up on this by using different types of musical setting to amplify the narrative developments. One such sequence comes at the start of Act III. Each of the acts begins with a clear, defining musical tone so that the aural scene sets the dramatic one. In Act I, this characterization comes in an energetic rush (in the manner of the openings of *Manon Lescaut* or Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur*) to kick the action off and also matches the sense of keen preparation for a big event; in Act II it is a forceful *allegro brillante* to match the crowds and the outdoor space (as in *La bohème*'s Act II). With Act III it is ponderous, threatening, low chords for the serious and morbid change of atmosphere. Mathieu comes straight in with a recitative-like appeal for money to support the Revolutionary cause. Musically it is dull, somewhat of a musical skeleton of an idea. But then Mathieu's rhetoric is unconvincing, as the crowd's lack of response shows (even after a threat of the guillotine). When Gérard arrives, he takes over.

Gérard is charismatic and a better politician, and his speech is more colourful and dramatic as he connects with the crowd – stirring them instead of haranguing them. Giordano progressively gives the music a wider range of expression to match, especially in dynamics and pitch – the music gives that sense of uplift the crowd is beginning to feel. But it is the third section that hits the mark. After the crude attempts of Mathieu, and then the more individualized ones of Gérard, we reach the most personal of all with the old woman Madelon. She steps forward with her remaining grandchild. With a sustained melody in the accompaniment, and punctuating bass notes, she describes in speech-like phrases how her son fought and died at the Bastille, and her elder grandson fought and died at Valmy.

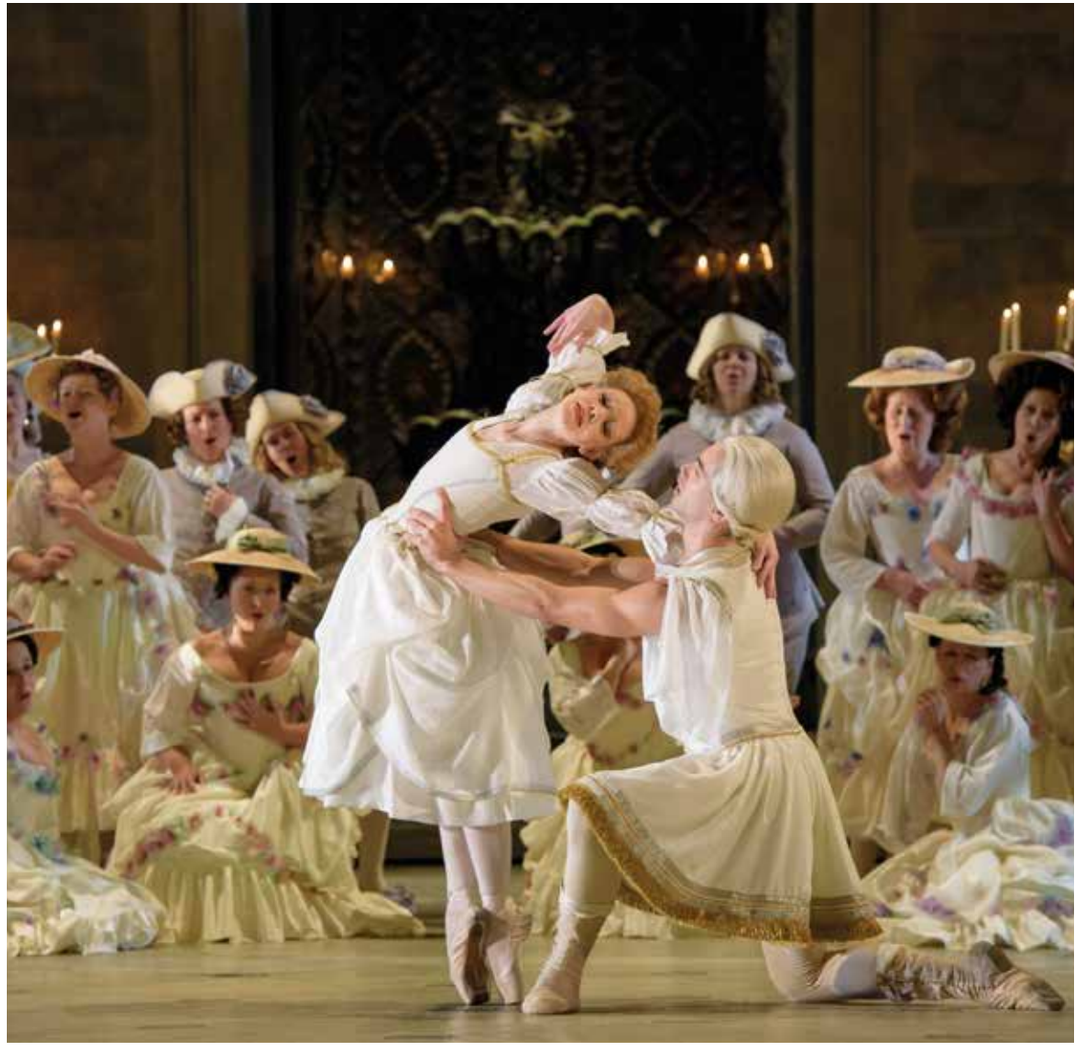
She now only has the one grandson left. And at this point the music swells into a sustained and lyrical phrase as she offers up the last of her blood line to the cause. The music's blossoming closes in again, the child is accepted, and at her last embrace of him the melodic phrase from her previous line, 'This is Roger's son, the last of the line', plays in the orchestra. And then *La Carmagnole* bursts in from a crowd offstage, its jaunty melody and vital rhythm in striking contrast to the grief and sacrifice of Madelon. Giordano throws us back from the personal to the crowd and the political.

The use of expansive melodic writing for solo voice recurs through the opera as the signifier of personal emotion against the backdrop of historical events. Giordano establishes the character of Andrea Chénier in Act I by using the contrasts of dramatic sections built into the libretto by Illica with the two 'party turns' at the Contessa di Coigny's ball. The first diversion for the Contessa's guests is the new pastoral song by one of them, Filandro Fiorinelli, a composer. The inconsequence of his Arcadian twitterings as he sets the bucolic scene is described in the music through Giordano's trilling strings, and then in the song itself with the self-consciously lovely voices of the shepherds and shepherdesses in rich harmony, including delicate sighs in the music to match those of the text. This is fake emotion, set to musical conventions; the image of the countryside here is twee and clichéd. It is entirely suited to the aristocratic entertainment – think of Marie Antoinette playing at being a shepherdess. But there is a subtext too. After Gérard's outburst near the start of Act I at his elderly servant father's treatment by his aristocratic employers, 'È l'ora della morte' (It is the hour of doom), what are we to make of the shepherds lamenting that they must leave and tomorrow will be far away? The world is changing, as Chénier's following *Improvviso* makes clear.

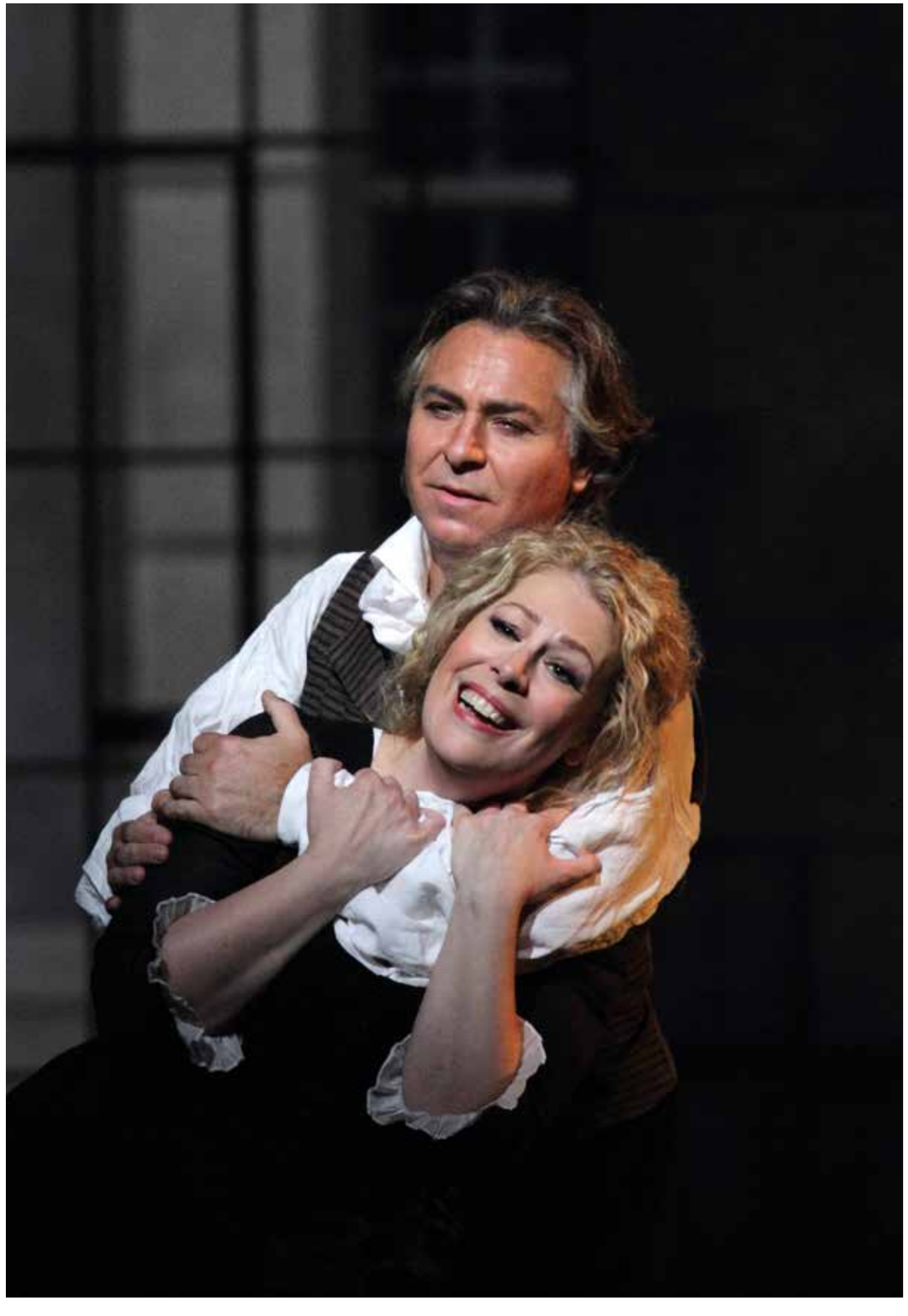
The spontaneous nature of Chénier's poem immediately makes a comparison of form and tone with the rigid, dated conventionality of Fiorinelli's composition. Instead of the repetitive, if charming, textures of the pastoral song, Chénier gives a passionate and immediate response to the realities of nature. Each of the short sections of the *Improvviso* works towards a dramatic conclusion before changing direction in the next instalment of the poem's narrative journey. This has the effect of creating a series of waves of emotion as the music builds to a sectional peak, then resets for the rise to the next peak. First, the view of the beauty of nature; second, the transition to the church and its uncharitable cruelty; third, the reality of the starving peasants. Cumulatively, the final section becomes the strongest: Maddalena as the embodiment of understanding and compassion. Giordano heads towards high and dramatic melodic phrases to conclude these sections, becoming more sustained and lyrical with each in turn, most overt in the final section. Broad melody is the musical language of the personal, it comes from the heart. The coda to the whole 'pastoral' dramatic sequence comes with the introduction of the marching beggars. Locally, it is an immediate alternative counterpoint – rhythmic and physical – to the dancing of the gavotte. But more broadly, Illica's dramatic thrust – beautifully articulated by Giordano in the different musical settings – is from the Arcadian vision of fantasy to Chénier's observation of the contemporary countryside to the physical suffering of the peasants themselves, who we now see in person. The musical return to the gavotte, which concludes the act, is now heard as a tainted sound for a tainted, tottering world.

Gérard's long solo in Act III – 'Nemico della patria?' (An enemy of the people?), the longest unbroken speech in the libretto – also follows a dramatic and musical journey from observation to honest expression. It starts with Giordano responding in his setting to individual phrases and the rhythms of each line of Illica's text, avoiding continuous melody and formal rhythmic pulse, as Gérard ponders how he is still a servant, no longer to the aristocracy but now to his own violent passions. As he thinks of re-awakening the voice of his conscience, the music opens out into a broad melody, richly orchestrated. This is the emotional core of the solo and the sign that Gérard is no Scarpia – he has a conscience, and indeed will act upon it, even if it proves too late and his political sway insufficient. The move into full-blown melody gives a particular focus to the section in comparison to the music before it, and indeed after. The contrast is the musical equivalent of a film close-up as we notice an intensity in the sound and a prolonging of time within this particular sound world.

The same method of throwing attention onto one section comes in Maddalena's Act III 'La mamma morta', in which she describes her mother's death at the hands of the Revolutionary mob and her rescue and protection by Bersi, but also her despair at life. The vocal line is fluid, with some repeating motifs, but no sense of continuous melody. The sparse chordal accompaniment, broken up by rests,



Sarah O'Connell and Roger Molist, *Andrea Chénier* © 2015 ROH. Photographed by Bill Cooper



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is subject to the shifting pacing that the delivery of the words in their dramatic context requires. But then Maddalena presents her revelatory insight – her love for Chénier is the key to living. And with this, the music moves from *parlando* into sustained melody in the same way as it does at Gérard's moment of self-comprehension. The music soars and flows with Maddalena's sustained and passionate explanation of love as the source of life.

The final duet for Chénier and Maddalena, in Act IV, has power through its marked alternation between the lyrical melodies of love that the couple exchange and the increasingly urgent musical interjections that acknowledge the rising sun and ultimately their call to death. The personal and expansive emotions are presented first in the melody of Chénier: 'Vicino a te' (Next to you), a 3/4 tempo marked 'slowly and very calm', in which the often rising vocal phrases imbue the long melody with a yearning quality. Next, Maddalena introduces a distinctive broad phrase that drops by a characteristic perfect 4th and features prominently a 4/4 musical motif for love to the line 'Ah! Chi la parola estrema dalle labbra raccoglie è Lui, è l'Amor' (It is Love himself who will pluck the final words from my lips). Finally they share a broad melody ('La nostra morte è il trionfo dell'amor!' – Our death is the triumph of love), not so much romantic now as noble, with its held notes, assertive rhythm and accompaniment figurations of block chords and martial triplets. This is heroic love, a concluding fusion of the personal passions and the great historical backdrop. The cumulative effect of these melodic sections of individual emotion is heightened by the very short passages of musical urgency between, in which a rising and rushing syncopated figure in particular marks the public realm of the lovers' increasingly imminent deaths as dawn nears. Schmidt the gaoler calls their names: the realism of a drum roll and their spoken responses are thrown into relief by a final, high, sung statement as Chénier and Maddalena declare that they welcome death together. The orchestral peroration concludes stirringly with the 'love' theme in the brass under high tremolo strings.

Giordano's style is restless in *Andrea Chénier*. He sets few sustained sections, but responds fluidly almost line by line – like a very detailed mosaic in which we sense the whole picture rather than the many different elements – and with particular attention to emphasizing the flow between dramatic episodes. Where the music settles, we sense a dramatic spotlight: the flowing, lyrical power of melody is the analogue for open expression of individual feelings, expansive emotions over which to linger. Where the music keeps us guessing, we follow the events of the plot and movements of the characters. Behind them, such elements as the aristocratic gavotte and quotations of *La Carmagnole* and the *Marseillaise* remind us of that bigger historical soundscape in which the *ancien régime* is swamped by the Revolution, which turns into Terror. Giordano's skill lies in creating music that articulates with constant energy and fluidity both the broad canvas of historical events and the individualized emotions of the doomed love story in the foreground, and in doing so makes the most of Illica's pacey story of politics and passion.

—John Snelson specializes in music and the stage. His many publications include *How to Enjoy Opera* (Oberon/Bloomsbury) and *Andrew Lloyd Webber* (Yale University Press). His new publications include *Reviewing the Situation: the British Musical from Noël Coward to Lionel Bart* (Bloomsbury) and a chapter in *Puccini In Context* (Cambridge University Press). He lectures at Goldsmiths, University of London.

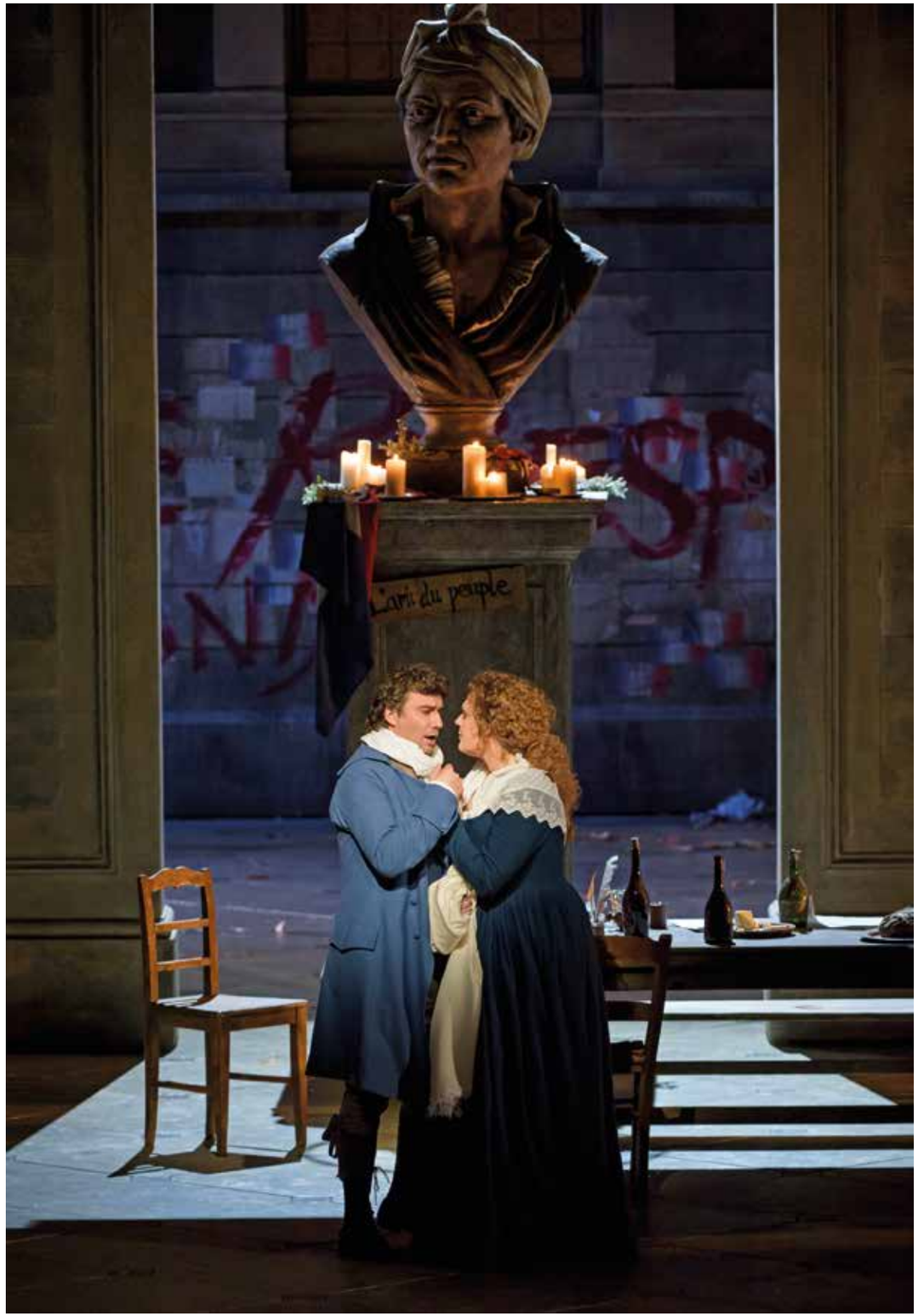
REVOLUTIONARY MOMENTS

Gregory Dart

Literary accounts of the French Revolution spread quickly from France to the rest of Europe, and from personal letters and memoirs to poetry and fiction. Soon after the fall of Robespierre in 1794 the radical London publisher Joseph Johnson started publishing the prison memoirs of the Girondins, the moderate republicans who had been guillotined in 1793. These included Madame Roland's *Appel à l'impartiale postérité* and Honoré Riouffe's *Mémoires sur les prisons*. The British poetess Helen Maria Williams, who was also incarcerated by the Jacobins, sent back vivid eye-witness accounts of the Revolution in a series of published letters, telling first of the glorious 'festival phase', which lasted from 1789 until 1791, when 'Liberty appeared adorned with the freshness of youth, and was loved with the ardour of passion', and then of the gradual descent into war, regicide and Terror. Nor was Williams the only British writer to witness the Revolution first hand. The feminist writer Mary Wollstonecraft was also there, excitedly recording this 'revolution in the minds of men', as was William Wordsworth the poet, who arrived in Paris shortly after the September Massacres of 1792. 'The earthquake is not satisfied at once', he remembered thinking to himself:

> And in this way I wrought upon myself,
> Until I seemed to hear a voice that cried,
> To the whole city, 'Sleep no more' [...]
> The place, all hushed and silent as it was,
> Appeared unfit for the repose of night,
> Defenceless as a wood where tigers roam.

Wordsworth and Wollstonecraft moved in revolutionary circles, Williams was intimate with many of the Gironde. What all these writers brought back with them to Britain, and what Johnson's translated memoirs consolidated, was an inside knowledge of the Revolution's nature and progress. They knew the difference between the Jacobins and the Girondins, the Mountain and the Plain, and were close readers of the constantly fluctuating public mood. Not that they were unique in this: back in Britain people scoured the newspapers daily, desperate to find out the latest news from Paris. The same thing was happening all over Europe. Never before had the continent been so gripped by a single event, or series of events. Not only during the 1790s but for a long time afterwards, everyone was an expert on the French Revolution. One consequence of this was that, even as the initial shock of the Revolution began to wane, and as memoirs and news bulletins gradually gave way to formal histories and fictional representations, a certain habit of historical fastidiousness prevailed. This is not the same thing as saying that all 19th-century treatments



Jonas Kaufmann and Eva-Maria Westbroek, *Andrea Chénier* © 2015 ROH.
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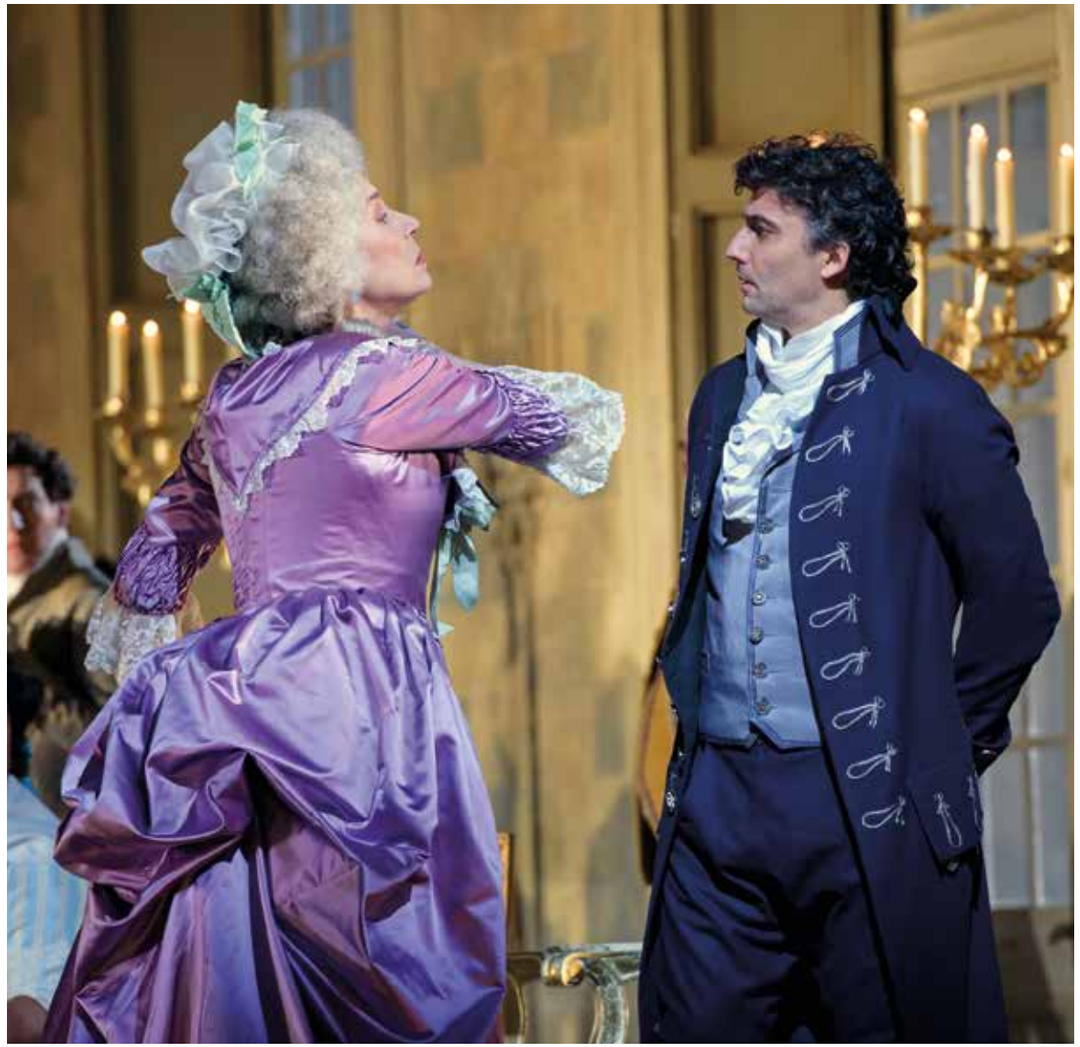

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of the Revolution remained dutifully tethered to specific locations, dates and times. Far from it. Many of the most telling literary responses to the event were not rendered 'in costume' or in blow-by-blow accounts at all. Often they were psychological dramas, great internal allegories of revolution and reversal. One has only to think of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798) or Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), both of which are reworkings of the great Revolutionary narrative, but in abstract, supernatural terms. And yet it is still true to say that those poems or plays of the 1800s that did seek to represent the Revolution *as a historical event* invariably did so with considerable nuance and accuracy, and this is as true of Georg Büchner's *Dantons Tod* (1835) as it is of Baroness Orczy's 'Scarlet Pimpernel' novels of the early 1900s.

Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* (1896) is no exception, for despite having been produced more than a hundred years after the events it describes, its handling of French Revolutionary motifs and sentiments is remarkably cogent. This fidelity has less to do with the opera's handling of the poet Chénier's life *per se*, than with its ability to capture the spirit of certain revolutionary 'moments' – those moments of extraordinary optimism or extraordinary irony that made up the successive acts of the drama. The first moment is invoked in Act I, which takes place on the eve of the Revolution in 1789. Goaded half-coquettishly and half-sardonically by Maddalena to improvise on the subject of '*amore*' (love), the poet Chénier responds with a lament on the miseries of the French peasantry, preaching the need for a new and different kind of love: '*pietà*' (sympathy, or compassion).

> Faced with such misery, what do our masters do?
> In your eyes alone I see an expression of human pity. [*pietà*]
> I looked at you, as at an angel, and said: 'Behold the beauty of life'
> Then your words pained me again.

The parallel with other literary recollections of that expansive moment, when France was 'standing on the top of golden hours', is exact. In his autobiographical poem *The Prelude* (1805) Wordsworth was to remember coming upon 'a hunger-bitten girl' during the early years of the Revolution, 'who crept along fitting her languid gait / Unto a heifer's motion', whereupon his French companion, an army captain named Michel Beaupuy, suddenly burst forth with the ardent exclamation: ''Tis against *that* / That we are fighting.' 'Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive', Wordsworth wrote, recalling the utopian optimism of the period, 'but to be young was very Heaven!'.

> O pleasant exercise of hope and joy!
> For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
> Upon our side, us who were strong in love!

Here 'love' means precisely what Chénier thinks it ought to mean to Maddalena: *pietà*, or, as the fellow travellers of the 1790s would have put it, sympathy, fellow-feeling. This larger sense of the word continues to follow Giordano's lovers throughout the opera; so that even in the midst of their most intoxicating romantic effusions, the audience is never allowed to forget that theirs is a love with a social conscience. Or, to put it more accurately, it is a love that has been

forged *through* social conscience. *Amore*, in this instance, has gained substance and even intensity from being born through *pietà*. It carries a humanitarian vision.

The second great revolutionary 'moment' displayed in the opera is that contained in Gérard's great 'Passion' aria ('Nemico della patria?') from Act III. France is at war, the Girondin general Dumouriez has just defected to the enemy and the Girondins themselves have been placed under suspicion. This corresponds roughly to the spring and early summer of 1793, a period of increasing paranoia both at home and abroad, and a time when the ironies of the revolutionary project were becoming increasingly evident. It was during this period, indeed, that some of the libertarians of the early 'festival phase' of the Revolution – men such as Robespierre himself, who in 1789 had been steadfastly opposed to the death penalty – gradually began to turn into political scourges, ministers of justice as violent and unforgiving as any that had existed under the *ancien régime*. Practically for the first time, patriotic republicans – men and women who had actively campaigned for the abolition of the monarchy – were being executed as traitors. With Louis XVI guillotined and many more expected to follow, the Revolution had taken a tragic, ironic turn.

The lament that Gérard makes in his 'Passion' aria is that, as a result of his love for Maddalena, he has lost his revolutionary idealism and become a slave of sensuality:

> My heart is full of hatred,
> and who has done this to me?
> Oh, bitter irony, it is love! [*amore*]
> Now I'm ruled by my senses
> Everything is false, only passion is true.

Very few French Revolutionaries ever confessed to such a decline in their own morals, but that did not prevent them from identifying it in their contemporaries. In their prison writings of 1793 the Girondins tried to represent themselves as the bastions of true republicanism, and their more radical brothers, the Jacobins, who were the men responsible for their imprisonment, as ambitious self-seekers, who had been playing the Revolution like a casino. 'That Robespierre,' wrote Madame Roland, only months before her execution, 'whom once I thought an honest man, is a very atrocious being. How he lies to his own conscience! How he delights in blood!' Giordano's Gérard is, to this extent, a man on the edge. He is, by his own admission, a man who 'murders while he weeps'. But even in the midst of this he is still capable of seeing what he has become, or is in danger of becoming. He has not entirely lost the end in the means. That is why Illica and Giordano have him echoing Pierre Vergniaud (the great Girondin orator, and one of the Revolution's sanest voices) towards the end of Act III, as he meditates on how the Revolution has taken to devouring its own children.

Love, in the form of a Maddalena-inspired *pietà*, pulls Gérard back from the brink. To some this late redemption links him with Jean-Lambert Tallien (1767–1820), the Jacobin who rebelled against Robespierre, the Terrorist who (somewhat belatedly) renounced

Terrorism. Either way, Tallien focuses one of the enduring problems surrounding the representation of the French Revolution for those that came afterwards: the absence of a hero. In the summer of 1794, shortly after the demise of the 'Incorruptible', the two young English poets Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey penned *The Fall of Robespierre*, a quickfire political drama designed to celebrate France's return to virtue. Tallien was its hero. But he, like almost every other leading Revolutionary one might cite, was a problematic choice. Not only was it difficult to imagine Tallien, or anyone else, as a real agent in this drama – for the Revolution was like a storm that seemed to drown all individual action. He also had blood – a lot of blood – on his hands.

The last two hundred years have been full of attempts by novelists and historians alike to find a phoenix among the ashes. Like many others, Honoré Riouffe chose the Girondins, the moderates with whom Andrea Chénier is associated in Giordano's opera. 'It is the first time', Riouffe wrote, 'that so many extraordinary men have been massacred all at once: youth, beauty, genius, virtue, talent, everything that is significant in man, was swallowed in one go.' But other, subsequent commentators have remained unconvinced. Carlyle in his vivid, opinionated *French Revolution* of 1837 found them far too intellectual, too inconstant, too weak. 'Such was the end of Girondism', he wrote, after describing their executions in October 1793. 'They arose to regenerate France, these men; and have accomplished *this*. Alas, whatever quarrel we had with them, has not their cruel fate abolished it? Pity only survives.' The German dramatist Georg Büchner chose Danton, but Danton too, impressive as he was as an orator in time of war, was not cut out to be a saviour. Nauseated by the Terror and by his own part in it, he was too tired and demoralized to stand up to Robespierre. Büchner's Danton is, in point of fact, a little like Illica's Gérard: an ineffectual penitent. The list of possible alternative candidates for hero of the Revolution could go on for ever: Mirabeau, Lafayette, Vergniaud, Desmoulins. Some modern historians and novelists have even tried to champion the cause of the 'Incorruptible' himself, Maximilien Robespierre, considering him by no means the most violent or unprincipled of the Revolution's leading statesman, simply the one that Romantic history has found it most convenient to blame.

The Revolution had no single champion then – but it had many martyrs, and *Andrea Chénier* is very true to the spirit of the 1790s in its rendition of the spirit of sacrifice – that curious libertarian death-wish that seems to have intoxicated so many. Chénier and Maddalena are genuinely gripped by it: once the shadows of death have begun to close around them, they begin to look to the guillotine with a kind of longing, clearly seeing it as a guarantor of meaning, of truth and transcendent value. 'Viva la morte!' they both sing in the final prison scene, 'Our death is the triumph of love!' Highly perverse as these sentiments might seem, they are, in fact, historically authentic. The Revolutionary histories and memoirs of the period are full of this cult of the guillotine. When the 22 Girondins were taken by cart to the Place de la Révolution to be executed, they all sang the *Marseillaise*. Nor was this a singular instance – for everywhere, even in the midst of the Revolution's most tragic events, one finds a liberal optimism

that shines through and beyond death. 'My intention' Riouffe wrote, on the opening page of his *Mémoires*, 'is not to pile hatred upon hatred, but to describe the things that I have witnessed [...] it is my duty to sacrifice all of the evils that I have suffered to the *Patrie*.' Giordano's Chénier says the same thing to Fouquier-Tinville at his trial in Act III. In her *Dernières Pensées*, written shortly before her execution in 1793, Madame Roland composed a passionate farewell to her secret lover, François Buzot:

> And you whom I dare not name! [...] You whom the most terrible of passions did not prevent from respecting the boundaries of virtue, will it pain you to see me precede you to those regions where we can love one another without crime, where nothing can prevent us from being united? There all dark prejudices, arbitrary exclusions, hateful passions will fall silent, and all the forms of tyranny.

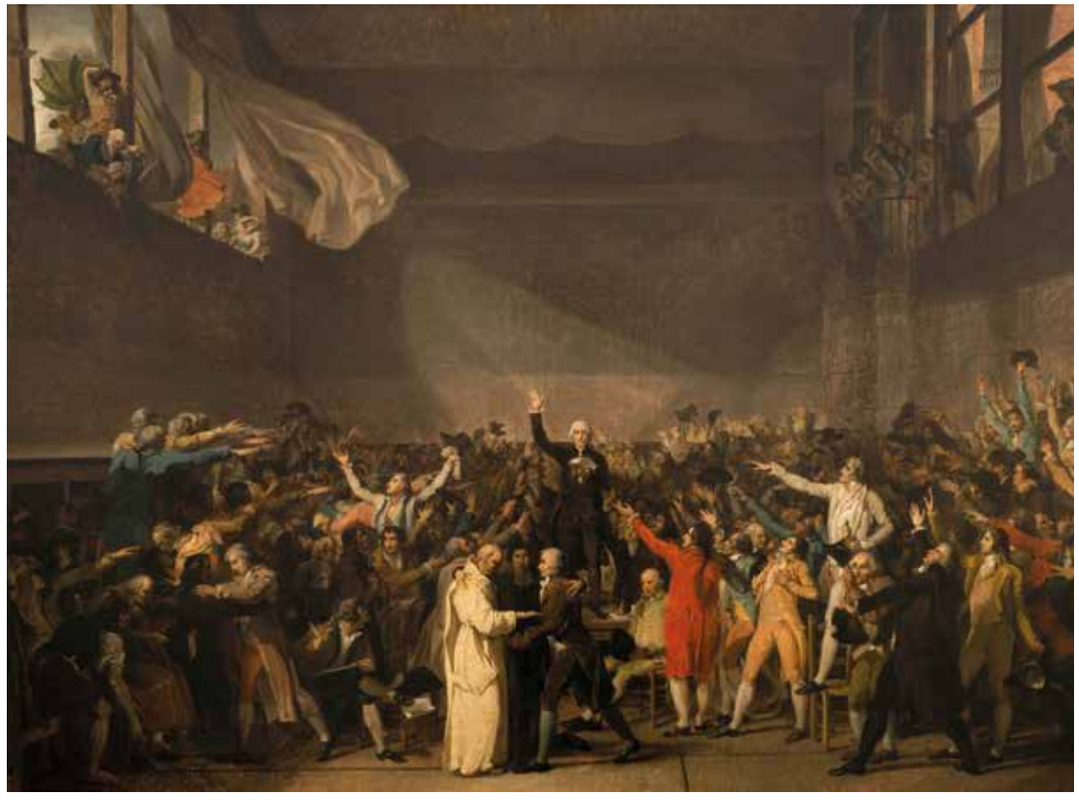
There was a purity about the first French Revolution that later ones – French or otherwise – have struggled to match. Even in their darkest hours, the first Revolutionaries felt they were making history, even if it was a history that they themselves, as individuals, might not live to see. The Paris revolutions of 1830 and 1848 were short-lived and shabby by comparison. As Karl Marx said of the latter: 'History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce.' Nineteenth-century British literature was almost as fascinated by the Revolution as its French equivalent, although in its renditions there was often less emphasis on the tragedy than on the farce. Many English writers, including liberals, could never quite get beyond seeing the Revolution as a terrible derailment of the cause of liberty, a kind of historical mistake. Why couldn't the French have satisfied themselves, like the British, with a constitutional monarchy? And why revolution instead of reform? Thomas Carlyle's *The French Revolution: a History* was a brilliant and provocative account of the political carnival of the 1790s, heavily soaked in Gérard-esque irony. Charles Dickens, a devotee of Carlyle, adopted the same sardonic attitude in *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859). Only in the foreground love plot did Dickens show any sympathy for the Revolutionary sensibility, orchestrating a grand finale in which Sydney Carton, an English lawyer desperately in love with the Frenchwoman Lucie Darnay, sacrifices himself for his lookalike, Lucie's husband Charles. Going to the guillotine in Darnay's stead, Carton considers that 'It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known.'

Giordano's opera shares several motifs with Dickens's novel. Gérard is the Sydney Carton character, belatedly reforming himself for love. But in the opera the substitution sacrifice is undertaken not by him but by Maddalena, as she takes the place of Idia Legray, another innocent victim of the corrupt judge Fouquier-Tinville. Not that Maddalena sees it as a sacrifice. For her it is a consummation devoutly to be wished: to die with her beloved Chénier, and to bask (like Madame Roland and her forbidden paramour Buzot) in a quasi-classical Elysium.

> At the moment of death
> We become immortal.
> Death! Love that never ends!

Illica's text is suggestively ambiguous at this point. The possibility of reading a current of genuine revolutionary feeling into Chénier and Maddalena's repeated invocations to *amore* has been discussed already – but that is what it is, a little window of possibility, a hermaneutic lunette. Illica does not thrust the lovers' republican idealism – if that is what it is – down our throats. But nor does he Christianize it. It is not a Catholic heaven Chénier and Maddalena are looking forward to, not something to be defined against the world of politics, but, as in Madame Roland's final letter to her lover, a realm of eternal love that is a transfiguration of it. Looked at in this light we can see that what Illica and Giordano have offered us in *Andrea Chénier* is an opera that, without turning its characters into revolutionary sermonizers, has striven hard to put on the costume of historical feeling, recapturing the unique atmosphere of that extraordinary time.

—Gregory Dart is Professor of English at University College London and is author of *Rousseau, Robespierre and English Romanticism* (1999) and *Metropolitan Art and Literature 1810-1840: Cockney Adventures* (2012). In recent years he has been working on a scholarly edition of the Romantic essayist Charles Lamb for Oxford University Press.



The Tennis Court Oath, 20 June 1789: oil on canvas (1791), French school after a sketch by Jacques-Louis David ©Musées de la Ville de Paris/Musée Carnavalet/Bridgeman Images

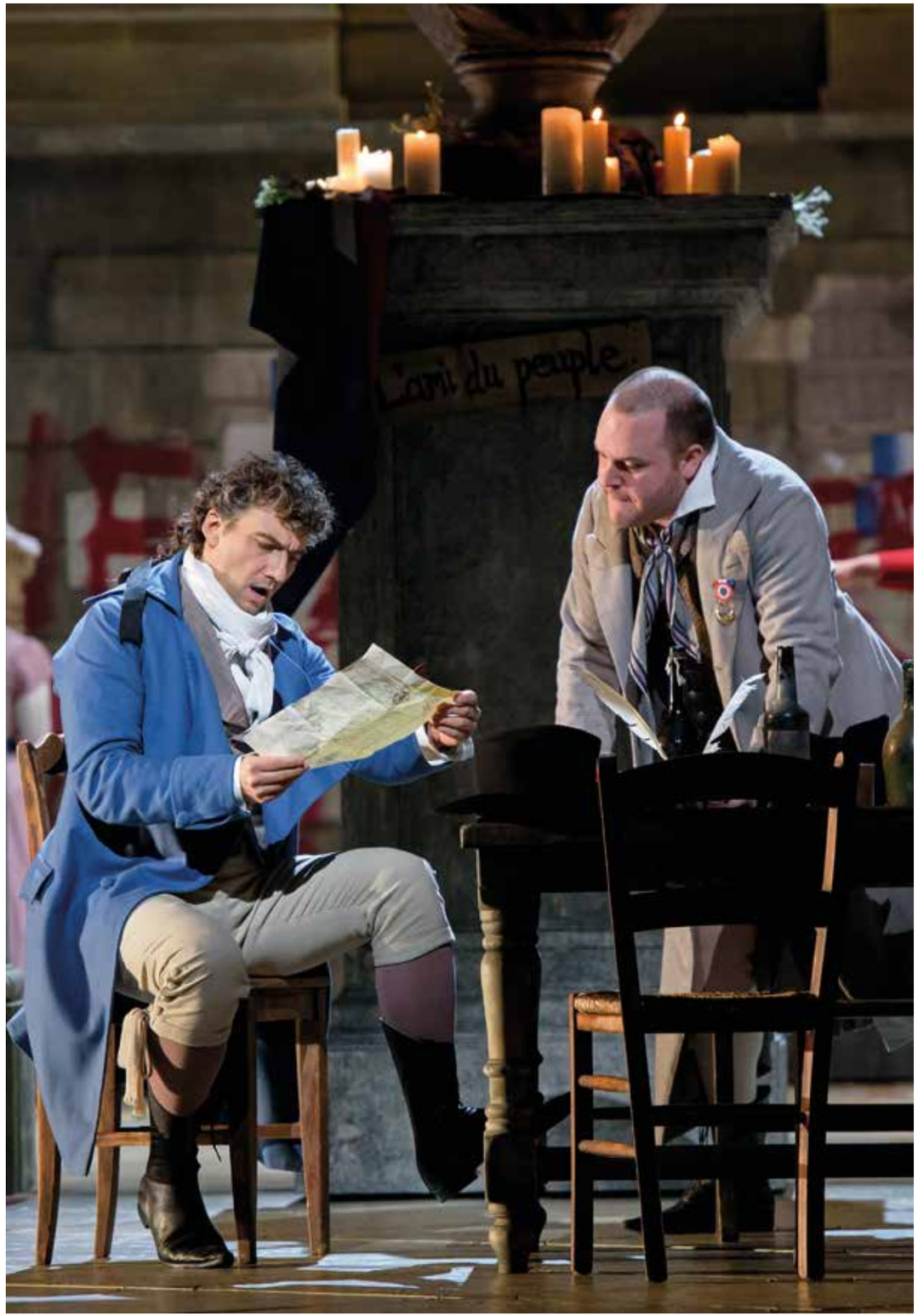
PERFORMANCE NOTE

The world premiere of *Andrea Chénier* was on 28 March 1896, at La Scala, Milan. The cast included Giuseppe Borgatti as Andrea Chénier, Evelina Carrera as Maddalena di Coigny and Mario Sammarco as Carlo Gérard. The conductor was Rodolfo Ferrari. The first London performance was on 16 April 1903 at Camden Theatre, sung in English.

Andrea Chénier had its Covent Garden premiere on 11 November 1905. The cast included Giovanni Zenatello as Chénier, Phoebe Strakosch as Maddalena and Sammarco as Gérard, conducted by Leopoldo Mugnone. The opera was only moderately successful. It had a warmer reception when it returned in 1907 with a cast including Enrico Caruso (Chénier), Emmy Destinn (Maddalena) and Sammarco (Gérard), conducted by Ettore Panizza. Even so, *Chénier* did not return to the Covent Garden repertory until 1925, when the production with Giacomo Lauri-Volpi in the title role received poor reviews. There were also complaints that the opera was very costly to stage. Performances in 1930, marking the London debut of Beniamino Gigli (Chénier) and with Margaret Burke-Sheridan (Maddalena) and Giovanni Inghilleri (Gérard), were praised, but failed to keep the work in the repertory.

More than fifty years on, *Andrea Chénier* received its first Royal Opera production (hired from Cologne Opera), directed by Michael Hampe and conducted by Richard Armstrong. The production opened on 10 February 1984 with a cast including José Carreras (Chénier), Rosalind Plowright (Maddalena) and Bernd Weikl (Gérard). The production was revived in May 1985, conducted by Julius Rudel, with a cast including Plácido Domingo (Chénier), Anna Tomowa-Sintow (Maddalena) and Giorgio Zancanaro (Gérard). *Andrea Chénier* received one concert performance at the Royal Festival Hall during the House closure, on 23 February 1998, when Armstrong conducted a cast including José Cura (Chénier), Maria Guleghina (Maddalena) and Anthony Michaels-Moore (Gérard).

The current production, by David McVicar, opened on 20 January 2015. Antonio Pappano, Music Director for The Royal Opera, conducted, and the cast included Jonas Kaufmann (Chénier), Eva-Maria Westbroek (Maddalena) and Željko Lučić (Gérard). The production was broadcast live to cinemas on 29 January 2015 and later released on DVD and Blu-Ray by Opus Arte. The 2019 revival was conducted by Daniel Oren, with a cast including Roberto Alagna (Chénier), Sondra Radvanovsky (Maddalena) and Dimitri Platanias (Gérard).



Jonas Kaufmann and Roland Wood, *Andrea Chénier* © 2015 ROH.
Photographed by Bill Cooper

BIOGRAPHIES

ANTONIO PAPPANO Conductor

He has been Music Director of The Royal Opera since 2002 and of the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome from 2005-2023. He has held previous titles with Norwegian Opera, Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels, and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. He is Chief Conductor Designate of the London Symphony Orchestra, taking the full Chief Conductor title from 2024. Guest conductor appearances have included the Berlin and New York POs, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the London, Chicago and Boston SOs, the Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, the Vienna State Opera, Metropolitan Opera and La Scala, Milan, the Salzburg and Verbier Festivals and the BBC Proms. He has been an exclusive recording artist for Warner Classics since 1995 and has fronted critically-acclaimed BBC Television documentaries. As a pianist, he has accompanied many singers including Joyce DiDonato and Ian Bostridge. Awards and honours include Gramophone's 'Artist of the Year' in 2000, the 2003 Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera and the 2004 Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award. In 2012 he was created a Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Republic of Italy, and a Knight of the British Empire for his services to music, and in 2015 he was named the 100th recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society's Gold Medal. He became Commander of the Royal Victorian Order in the New Year Honours 2024 for conducting the Coronation Orchestra, on the occasion of the Coronation of their Majesties the King and the Queen.

DAVID MCVICAR Director

David McVicar was born in Glasgow and trained as an actor at The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He has directed *Don Carlos*, *Agrippina*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Tosca*, *Norma*, *Roberto Devereux*, *Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Anna Bolena* and *Il trovatore* for the Metropolitan Opera, New York; *Death in Venice*, *Andrea Chénier*, *Les Troyens*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Aida*, *Salome*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Faust*, *Die Zauberflöte* and *Rigoletto* for ROH; and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Carmen* and *La bohème* for Glyndebourne Festival. Other productions include *Falstaff* (Santa Fe), *Death in Venice* (Vienna Volksoper), *La Calisto*, *I masnadieri* (Teatro alla Scala, Milan), *Gloriana* (Teatro Real, Madrid), *La traviata* (Liceu, Barcelona), *Così fan tutte*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* (Opera Australia), *Les Troyens* (Vienna State Opera, Milan), *La clemenza di Tito* (Aix-en-Provence Festival), *Tristan und Isolde* (Vienna, Tokyo), *Macbeth*, *Wozzeck*, *Rusalka*, *Elektra*, *Billy Budd*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Il trovatore*, *Manon* (Lyric Opera of Chicago), *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, *Così fan tutte* (Opéra National du Rhin), *Medée*, *Alcina*, *Tosca*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Der Rosenkavalier* (ENO), *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (La Monnaie, Berlin State Opera, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées), *Falstaff*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *The Rake's Progress*, *La traviata*, *Così fan tutte*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Idomeneo* (Scottish Opera), *Sweeney Todd* (Opera North) and *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (Salzburg Festival). He was knighted in the 2012 Diamond Jubilee Honours List and made Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Government.

THOMAS GUTHRIE Revival Director

Thomas Guthrie's directing credits include *Aida* (Liceu, Barcelona), *Semele* (Paris, Milan, Barcelona, Rome, London), David Lang's *Public Domain* (London Symphony Orchestra), *Dido and Aeneas* (Barbican), *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebots* and *Apollo et Hyacinthus* (Classical Opera Company), *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *The Fairy Queen* (English Touring Opera), the UK premiere of Jonathan Dove's *The Monster in the Maze* (LSO), *L'Orfeo* (Princeton University, where he was a Visiting Fellow in 2018), *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Die Zauberflöte* and *Le nozze di Figaro* (Longborough Festival Opera) and *Constanze* and *Robinson Crusoe* (West Green Opera). He was a member of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme with The Royal Opera 2007–9, directing scenes for the Jette Parker Young Artists Summer Performances, Donizetti's *Rita* and Walton's *The Bear*. He has staged *Ludd* and *Isis and Hot House* for ROH Learning and Participation and has revived *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Andrea Chénier* (Beijing), *Die Zauberflöte* and *Le nozze di Figaro* for The Royal Opera.

ROBERT JONES Set Designer

Opera credits include *Anna Bolena*, *Guilio Cesare*, *Norma*, *Die Fledermaus* (Metropolitan Opera); *Andrea Chénier* (Royal Opera House, Beijing, San Francisco, Barcelona); *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Paris, Berlin, Strasbourg); *Don Carlos* (Frankfurt, Tokyo, Chicago); *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* (Glyndebourne Festival, Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Orfeo* (Garsington Opera); *Tristan und Isolde* (Tokyo, Vienna); *Gloriana*, *Don Carlos* (Teatro Real, Madrid); *Don Giovanni* (Opera Australia); *L'elisir d'amore*, *On the Town* (English National Opera) and *Manon Lescaut* (Gothenburg). In theatre he has designed extensively for the West End, Broadway, the National Theatre, Royal Shakespeare Company (as an Associate Artist), Chichester Festival, Donmar Warehouse, Almeida Theatre, the Old Vic, the Royal Albert Hall, Kiln Theatre and the Menier Chocolate Factory. He has been nominated for four Olivier Awards and two Evening Standard. He is also the winner of a Canadian Dora Mavor Moore award and a Drama-Logue award.

JENNY TIRAMANI Costume Designer

She has been Associate Designer at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East and Director of Theatre Design at Shakespeare's Globe. In 2003 she won the Olivier Award for Best Costume Design for *Twelfth Night* at Shakespeare's Globe. She has re-designed costumes for *Twelfth Night* (for which she won the 2014 Tony Award) and designed costumes for *Richard III* (Shakespeare's Globe, Apollo Theatre, Belasco Theatre, Broadway). She has worked with David McVicar on *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, Strasbourg, Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen), *La clemenza di Tito* (Aix-en-Provence, Toulouse, Marseilles, Chicago), *Orlando* (Lille, Paris), *Anna Bolena* (Metropolitan Opera, New York) and *Le nozze di Figaro* (Opera Australia, Green Room Association Award for Best Costume Design). She is the founder of The School of Historical Dress, co-author of the two-volume *Seventeenth-Century Women's Dress Patterns* (V&A Publishing) and lectures on the history of costume.

ADAM SILVERMAN Lighting Designer

Lighting designer Adam Silverman works in opera, theatre and dance. Previously for ROH: *Wozzeck, La clemenza di Tito, New Dark Age, Lohengrin, Andrea Chénier, Adriana Lecouvreur* (RO); *Medusa*, The Wind, Aeternum (RB). Engagements elsewhere include *Pygmalion*, *Endgame*, *Rough For Theatre II* (Old Vic); *Machinal* (Theatre Royal Bath); *The Rhinegold*, *The Valkyie*, *Norma*, *Otello*, *Partenope*, *Powder Her Face*, *Julius Caesar*, *Billy Budd*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Peter Grimes*, *Boris Godunov*, *Rite of Spring*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Jenůfa*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *The Makropulos Case* and *Siegfried* (ENO); *Fedora*, *Don Carlos*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Un ballo in maschera* (Metropolitan Opera); *La Calisto*, *I Masnadieri* (La Scala, Milan); *The First Child*, *The Second Violinist*, *The Last Hotel* (Opera Ireland); *The Glass Menagerie* (Broadway, Het Hout Amsterdam); *PJ Harvey's Community of Hope* (world tour); *Il turco in Italia* (Aix-en-Provence Festival); *Les Huguenots*, *Aida* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); and *Pique Dame* (Bayerische Staatsoper).

ANDREW GEORGE Choreography and Movement

Royal Opera credits include *Andrea Chénier*, *Salome*, *Les Troyens* and *Adriana Lecouvreur* (also Barcelona, Vienna, La Scala, Milan, Metropolitan Opera). Work elsewhere includes *Agrippina* (also Metropolitan Opera, Barcelona), *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Valkyrie* and *The Turn of the Screw* for English National Opera; *Carmen* (also Gothenburg), *Giulio Cesare* (also Metropolitan Opera, Chicago, Lille), *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (also Chicago, San Francisco) and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* for Glyndebourne; *Falstaff* (also Santa Fe), *The Rake's Progress* (also Turin), *Der Rosenkavalier* (also Opera North, ENO) and *La traviata* (also Geneva, Madrid, Barcelona, WNO) for Scottish Opera; *Macbeth*, *Rusalka* (also San Francisco, Canadian Opera) and *Wozzeck* for Lyric Opera of Chicago; *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Anna Bolena* and *Don Giovanni* (Metropolitan Opera), *Don Carlo* (Frankfurt, Madrid, Chicago), *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Paris, Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen), *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (Salzburg Festival), *Tannhäuser* (Milan) and *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (Strasbourg).

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. 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.

JAMES CLEVERTON Mathieu

British baritone James Cleverton's repertory ranges from Mozart and Wagner works to contemporary and new music. Appearances include with the Royal Opera House, Zurich Opera, Salzburg Festival, Theater Saint Gallen, Glyndebourne Festival, Opéra de Rennes, Garsington Opera, English National Opera, Irish National Opera, Scottish Opera, Grange Park Opera, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, Buxton International Festival, Opera Holland Park, The Hallé Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta de la Comunidad de Madrid, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Conductors he has worked with include Antonio Pappano, Mark Elder, Karen Kamensek, Donald Runnicles, Daniel Oren, Marc Albrecht, Martyn Brabbins, Edward Gardner, Franz Welser-Möst, George Benjamin and Thomas Adès.

AMARTUVSHIN ENKHBAT Carlo Gérard

Born in Mongolia, Enkhbat graduated from the Mongolian State University of the Arts and is an Honoured Artist of Mongolia. He began his career as a principal soloist at the State Academic Opera House of Mongolia. Awards include prizes at Operalia and the BBC Cardiff Competition, Queen Sonja Competition and International Tchaikovsky Competition (St Petersburg). Engagements include *Rigoletto* (Parma, Macerata, Geneva), *Macbeth*, Amonasro in *Aida* (La Scala, Milan), *Nabucco* (Vienna, Padova, Berlin), Conte di Luna in *Il trovatore*, Giorgio Germont in *La traviata*, Scarpia in *Tosca* (Teatro di San Carlo, Opera Carlo Felice Genova), Don Carlo in *La forza del destino* (Maggio Musicale) and *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Pagliacci* (Arena di Verona and Vienna). Recent engagements include *La forza del destino* (Parma), *Il trovatore* (Florence), *Nabucco* (Munich), *Aida* (Verona), *Rigoletto*, *Andrea Chénier* (Milan) and his Metropolitan Opera debut in *La traviata*. Previously for The Royal Opera: *Rigoletto*, *Nabucco*.

WILLIAM DAZELEY Pietro Fléville

William Dazeley's international career has led him to opera houses including English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Staatsoper Berlin, La Monnaie, Brussels, Théâtre du Châtelet and the Aix-en-Provence and Salzburg festivals. Recent engagements include Johan (*Werther*) in Baden-Baden, Alonso in Anthony Bolton's *Island of Dreams* at Grange Park Opera, Mr Gedge (*Albert Herring*) for Opera North, Starveling (*A Midummer Night's Dream*) for Opéra de Rouen, Musiklehrer (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) and Krusina (*The Bartered Bride*) for Garsington Opera and Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*) for Royal Danish Opera. Concert appearances include at Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, Cadogan Hall and Mozarteum Salzburg, and he has worked with the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Monteverdi Choir, Berlin Philharmonic, and San Francisco Symphony. Roles for The Royal Opera have included Marcello (*La bohème*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Yeletsky (*The Queen of Spades*), Mercutio (*Roméo et Juliette*) and Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*).

ALED HALL The Abbé

Welsh tenor Aled Hall's roles include Spoletta (*Tosca*), Pang (*Turandot*), 3rd Jew (*Salome*), Dancing Master (*Manon Lescaut*) and Abbé (*Andrea Chénier*) for The Royal Opera, Valzacchi (*Der Rosenkavalier*) for Royal Swedish Opera and Opera North, Don Curzio for Aix-en-Provence Festival, Tokyo and Baden-Baden, Mr Upfold (*Albert Herring*) for Salzburg Festival, Lo Zio Vezinet (*Il cappello di paglia di Firenze*), Ippia (*Saffo*) and Danilowitz (*L'Etoile du Nord*) for Wexford Festival Opera, Dr Caius (*Falstaff*), Borsa (*Rigoletto*), Spoletta (*Tosca*) and Alméric (*Iolanta*) for Scottish Opera, Goro, Don Basilio/Don Curzio, Monostatos, Scaramuccio (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Beadle Bamford (*Sweeney Todd*) and Le Remendado (*Carmen*) for Welsh National Opera, Spoletta (*Tosca*) and Gastone (*La traviata*) for English National Opera, and Bardolfo (*Falstaff*) and Frisellino (*Le pescatrici*) for Garsington Opera.

ALEKSEI ISAEV Carlo Gérard

Russian baritone Aleksei Isaev graduated from the Gnesin Russian Academy of Music. He made his professional debut in the title role of *Eugene Onegin* at Helikon Opera, returning later for Scarpia (*Tosca*) and Amonasro (*Aida*). Roles elsewhere have included Renato (*Un ballo in maschera*), Germont (*La traviata*), Nabucco and Iago (*Otello*) with the Moscow Philharmonic; Count di Luna (*Il trovatore*) for the Mariinsky Theatre and Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden (also Iago); Mazepa for Theater an der Wien (also Robert in *Iolanta*); Vodník (*Rusalka*) for The Royal Opera and Théâtre du Capitole, Toulouse; Enrico Ashton (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) for Semperoper Dresden; Eugene Onegin in Bari; the title role of *The Demon* in Bordeaux; Scarpia in Kazan; Count Igor in Ufa; Germont in Helsinki; Gryaznoy (*The Tsar's Bride*) in Tallinn; and Renato and Escamillo (*Carmen*) in Bangkok. Awards include the 'Brilliant start in art' award from the Elena Obraztsova foundation. Plans include Scarpia (ROH), Iago (Dresden), Don Pizarro (Dijon Opera) and Conte di Luna (Staatsoper Hamburg).

JONAS KAUFMANN Andrea Chénier

German tenor Jonas Kaufmann has performed over 70 roles at opera houses worldwide. Recent appearances include Enzo in *La Gioconda* (Salzburg Easter Festival, Teatro di San Carlo, Naples) and Otello and Calaf (Vienna State Opera). His repertory includes Werther (Paris Opera, Vienna, Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House), Andrea Chénier (ROH, Vienna, Liceu, Barcelona, La Scala, Milan), Tannhäuser (Salzburg Easter Festival), Siegmund (Metropolitan Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Naples), Radamès (Paris, Munich, Naples, Vienna), Cavaradossi (ROH, Milan, Zurich Opera, Munich, Teatro Real, Madrid, Naples), Dick Johnson (Metropolitan Opera, Vienna, Munich), Peter Grimes (Munich, Vienna), Lohengrin (Bayreuth Festival, Milan, Paris, Munich, Melbourne) and Tristan (Munich). Studio recordings include *Otello*, *Aida*, *Turandot*, *Insieme* (duets with Ludovic Tézier), *Das Lied von der Erde*, *Winterreise* and ten solo recitals. Awards include ten Echo/Opus Klassik awards, several Gramophone Awards and the Honorary Award of the Royal College of Music. He was made a Bavarian Kammersänger in 2013, an Austrian Kammersänger in 2021, an Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2018 and an Officier de Ordre de la Légion d'honneur in 2024.

ALEXANDER KRAVETS The Incredibile

His appearances include the title role of *The Nose* (Aix-en-Provence Festival, Opéra de Lyon), Police Inspector in *The Nose* (ROH, Komische Oper Berlin, Berlin State Opera, Dutch National Opera, Metropolitan Opera), Drunken Cossack in *Mazeppa* (Berliner PO, Baden-Baden Festival), 4th Jew in *Salome* (Finnish National Opera), Shabby Peasant in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (Teatro Real, Madrid, Teatro di San Carlo, Naples, DNO, Paris Opera), Chekalinsky in *The Queen of Spades* (ROH, Naples, La Monnaie, Brussels), Giove in *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (Hamburg), Schoolmaster in *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Sharikov in *A Dog's Heart* (DNO), Clare Quilty in *Lolita* (Prague), Sailor in *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* and Schoolmaster (Brussels), Kedril in *From the House of the Dead* (Teatro Real, Madrid), Čerevin in *From the House of the Dead* (Brussels, ROH), Astrologer in *Le Coq d'or* (Brussels, Madrid), Missail in *Boris Godunov* (La Scala, Milan). Plans include Sailor and Police Inspector (Brussels).

KATIA LEDOUX Bersi

French mezzo-soprano Katia Ledoux received the Press Prize at the IVC-Hertogenbosch in 2018, First Prize in the Nordfriesische Liedpreis at Husumer Liedkunst Wettbewerb in 2019, Special Prize at the HansGabor Belvedere Competition 2019 and the Special Prize at the Viñas Competition in 2022. Her recent and upcoming engagements include the title role of *Carmen* for Volksoper Wien, Schauspielhaus Zürich and the Holland Festival; La Messagiera (*Le lacrime di Eros*), Makuba (*How Anansi freed the Stories of the World*), Proserpine (*Eurydice - Die Liebenden, blind*) and Geneviève (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) for Dutch National Opera; Junon (*Platée*) for Zurich Opera; Frau Reich (*Die lustigen Weiber von Winsor*), Öffentliche Meinung (*L'Opinion Publique*), the title role of *Orphée aux Enfers* (also Venus), Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Marta (*Iolanta*) and Dritte Dame (*Die Zauberflöte*) for Volksoper Wien; Ježibaba (*Rusalka*) for Staatsoper Stuttgart; and Paola (*La Princesse de Trébizonde*) in recording with Opera Rara. This is her Royal Opera debut.

ROSALIND PLOWRIGHT Contessa di Coigny

Rosalind Plowright enjoys an international career that has spanned over 45 years. Soprano roles for The Royal Opera sung alongside The Three Tenors have included Maddalena (*Andrea Chénier*), the title role of *Aida* and Leonora (*Il trovatore*); additional roles have included the title role in *Médée*, Donna Anna, Ariadne and Senta, which she has also sung at theatres in Europe and North America. As a mezzo-soprano, her repertory has expanded to include the roles of The Old Baroness (*Vanessa*), Mrs Sedley (*Peter Grimes*), Madelon (*Andrea Chénier*), Grandmother (*Jenůfa*), Kabanicha (*Katya Kabanova*), Madame de Croissy (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), Klytämnestra (*Elektra*), Herodias (*Salome*) and Countess (*The Queen of Spades*), which she has sung at the Bregenz, Glyndebourne, Spoleto and Wexford festivals; Staatsoper Berlin; Dutch National Opera; Lyon Opera, Paris Opera; National Theatre, Prague; La Scala, Milan; New National Theatre, Tokyo; Norwegian National Opera; Gothenburg Opera; Metropolitan Opera and Seattle Opera. Future engagements include Mamma Lucia at Bayerische Staatsoper. She was awarded an OBE for Services to Music in 2007.

SONDRA RADVANOVSKY Maddalena di Coigny

American-Canadian soprano Sondra Radvanovsky appears regularly at opera companies worldwide. For The Royal Opera she has sung Donna Leonora (*La forza del destino*), Roxane (*Cyrano de Bergerac*), Lina (*Stiffelio*), Leonora (*Il trovatore*) and the title roles of *Tosca* and *Manon Lescaut*. She is a regular guest at the Metropolitan Opera, where recent engagements include Floria Tosca, Aida, Amelia (*Un ballo in maschera*), Norma, Elisabetta (*Roberto Devereux*), Maria Stuarda and Anna Bolena. Recent appearances elsewhere include Luisa Miller and Maddalena di Coigny (Liceu, Barcelona), Floria Tosca (Vienna State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Los Angeles Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper), Elisabetta (San Francisco Opera, Munich), Leonora and Aida (Paris Opera), Amelia (Paris, Zurich Opera) and Norma (Lyric Opera of Chicago, Munich). Recordings include Verdi scenes with Dmitri Hvorostovsky and a solo disc of Verdi arias.

ASHLEY RICHES Roucher

Ashley Riches studied at King's College, Cambridge and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. He was a Jette Parker Young Artist at the Royal Opera House and a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist. 2023/24 Season engagemnts include Beethoven's Missa Solemnis with David Afkham in Madrid, Verdi's Requiem with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Kazuki Yamada, Rheinberg (*Lurline*) in Dublin with John Wilson, Handel's *Messiah* in concert at Glyndebourne, and Purcell's *King Arthur* with Paul McCreesh in Lyon and Lausanne. 2022/23 Season highlights included his Bayerische Staatsoper debut as Silvano (*La Calisto*), Purcell Odes and Handel arias with The English Concert and Harry Bicket; Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri* with Daniel Harding and the Czech Philharmonic; Angelotti (*Tosca*) with the Bergen Philharmonic; Messiaen's *St François d'Assise* with Ryan Wigglesworth and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra; and the world premiere of Ian Fletcher's *Jonah* in London. His debut solo recital recording, *A Musical Zoo*, was released by Chandos in 2021.

SIMON THORPE Major-Domo

Born in Tasmania, Australian baritone Simon Thorpe studied at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and spent a year at the National Opera Studio. His many roles include the title roles of *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *Rigoletto*, Jack Rance (*La fanciulla del West*), Scarpia (*Tosca*), Tonio (*Pagliacci*), Alfio (*Cavalleria rusticana*) Michele (*Il tabarro*), Germont (*La traviata*), Ankerström (*Un ballo in maschera*) and Pizarro (*Fidelio*). He has appeared with UK companies including Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, Holland Park, English Touring Opera and Longborough Festival Opera, and elsehwere with Opéra Toulon, Teatro Nacional de São Carlos, Lisbon, Opera Australia and State Opera of South Australia. Concert appearences include with the London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra and the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra. Upcoming engagements include the title role of *Falstaff* for the West Green House Opera.

EDDIE WADE Fouquier-Tinville

Eddie Wade made his Royal Opera debut in 1996 as the Mandarin (*Turandot*), winning First Place and the Verdi/Wagner Prize at the National Mozart Competition the same year. Highlights include Peter (*Hansel and Gretel*), Alcindoro and Marcello (*La bohème*), Baron Douphol (*La traviata*), Foquier-Tinville (*Andrea Chénier*), Julio (*The Exterminating Angel*), Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*), Prince Arjuna (*Satyagraha*), Count Almaviva (*The Barber of Seville*) and the title role of *Rigoletto*. He has performed with Danish National Opera, Nederlandse Reisopera, Glyndebourne Festival and on Tour, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Irish National Opera, Opera North, English Touring Opera, Opera Holland Park, International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival, The Philharmonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Conductors he has worked with include Mark Elder, Antonio Pappano, Charles Mackerras, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Maurizio Benini, Carlo Rizzi, Philippe Auguin, Andris Nelsons, Jakub Hrůša and Mark Wigglesworth.

JEREMY WHITE Schmidt

He has sung with The Royal Opera since 1991, his many roles including Kecal (*The Bartered Bride*), Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*), Mr Peachum (*The Beggar's Opera*), Parsons (*1984*), Snug (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Truffaldino (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Talpa (*Il tabarro*), Betto di Signa (*Gianni Schicchi*), Daddy Hogan (*Anna Nicole*), Le Roi (*Cendrillon*), Badger/Priest (*The Cunning Little Vixen*), Sacristan (*Tosca*), Benoît (*La bohème*), Hans Foltz and Hans Schwarz (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Le Comte de Vaudemont (*Les vêpres siciliennes*), Recorder of Norwich (*Gloriana*) and Bonze. Roles elsewhere include Achilla (*Giulio Cesare*) in Bordeaux, Varlaam (*Boris Godunov*), Selim (*Il turco in Italia*) and Pluto (*Orfeo*) for ENO, Rocco (*Fidelio*), Kecal and Superintendent Budd (*Albert Herring*) for Opera North, Parsons for La Scala, Milan, Mayor (*Jenůfa*) for Dutch National Opera, Dansker (*Billy Budd*) for Glyndebourne Festival and in New York, Le Sire de Béthune (*Les vêpres siciliennes*) for Dutch National Opera and Abbot (*Curlew River*) in New York.

JAMIE WOOLLARD Dumas

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 performs in their 2024 artist showcase at Wigmore Hall. For The Royal Opera he has performed the premieres of three micro-operas (*Lost and Found*, March 2022). His 2023/24 Royal Opera roles include Zuniga (*Carmen*), Ceprano (*Rigoletto*), and Dumas (*Andrea Chénier*), as well as covering Zebul (*Jephtha*) and Angelotti (*Tosca*).

ELENA ZILIO Madelon

Born in Bolzano, she studied piano and singing in Bolzano and Rome. She has collaborated with conductors including Giulini, Mehta, Muti, Pappano, Prêtre and Rostropovich and has recorded for Fonit Cetra and EMI. Recent engagements include Mamma Lucia in *Cavalleria rusticana* (Teatro di San Carlo, Naples, Maggio Musicale, Florence, La Monnaie, Brussels, Dutch National Opera, Liceu, Barcelona), Madelon (ROH, Rome Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Florence, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in concert), Countess of Coigny in *Andrea Chénier* (Bilbao), Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Rossini Opera Festival, Pesaro), Monitress in *Suor Angelica* and Zita in *Gianni Schicchi* (ROH), Filipyevna in *Eugene Onegin* (Frankfurt), Madelon (La Scala, Milan) and Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* (Arena di Verona). Plans include *Eugene Onegin* (Madrid), *Cavalleria rusticana* (Montecarlo) and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Teatro Regio di Parma).