GIUSEPPE VERDI

# LA TRAVIATA

#### CONDUCTOR Marco Armiliato

PRODUCTION Michael Mayer

set designer Christine Jones

costume designer Susan Hilferty

lighting designer Kevin Adams

choreographer Lorin Latarro

REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR Daniel Rigazzi

maria manetti shrem general manager Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER MUSIC DIRECTOR Yannick Nézet-Séguin

#### Opera in three acts

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, based on the play *La Dame aux Camélias* by Alexandre Dumas fils

Friday, January 20, 2023 7:30–10:30PM

The production of *La Traviata* was made possible by a generous gift from **The Paiko Foundation** 

Additional funding was received from Mercedes T. Bass, Mr. and Mrs. Paul M. Montrone, and Rolex

The revival of this production is made possible by a gift of the Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation, and Veronica Atkins, in honor of Nadine Sierra

Throughout the 2022–23 season, the Met honors Ukraine and its brave citizens as they fight to defend their country and its cultural heritage.

# The Metropolitan Opera 2022-23 SEASON



germont's daughter Allegra Herman

solo dancers James Whiteside Cara Seymour

Tonight's performances of the roles of Violetta and Alfredo are underwritten by the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Great Singers Fund.

Friday, January 20, 2023, 7:30-10:30PM

GASTONE

Scott Scully

Ismael Jordi

ALFREDO GERMONT



Ismael Jordi as Alfredo and Ermonela Jaho as Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata* 

\* Graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program

Yamaha is the Official Piano of the Metropolitan Opera.

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Chorus Master Donald Palumbo Musical Preparation Carol Isaac, Marie-France Lefebvre. Steven Osgood, and Katelan Trần Terrell\* Assistant Stage Director Rory Pelsue Assistant Set Designers Brett Banakis, Amelia Cook, and Felicitas Lamenca Assistant Costume Designers Glenna Jane Ryer and Amanda Whidden Assistant Choreographer Michaeljon Slinger Stage Band Conductor Joseph Lawson Italian Diction Coach Stefano Baldasseroni Prompter Carol Isaac Met Titles Sonya Friedman Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and painted by Metropolitan Opera Shops Costumes constructed and executed by Metropolitan Opera Costume Department; Arel Studio Inc., New York City; Lynne Baccus, New York City; Suitable Costumes LTD, Toronto; and Tricorne Inc., New York City Fabric printing by Gene Mignola, Inc., Asbury Park, New Jersey Embroidery by Stickerei Müller GMBH, Diespeck, Germany Wigs and makeup constructed and executed by Metropolitan

Opera Wig and Makeup Department

This performance is made possible in part by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

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Met Titles

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# Synopsis

#### Act I

In and around Paris during the 19th century. Violetta Valéry knows that she will die soon, exhausted by her restless life as a courtesan. At a party at Violetta's home, Gastone introduces her to Alfredo Germont, a young man who has been fascinated with her for a long time. Rumor has it that he has been inquiring after her health every day. His seemingly naïve and emotional attitude amuses the guests, and they ask Alfredo to propose a toast. He celebrates true love, and Violetta responds in praise of unceasing pleasure. As the party moves into the ballroom, Violetta feels faint and stays behind. Only Alfredo remains, and he declares his love. There is no place for such feelings in her life, Violetta replies, but she gives him a camellia, asking him to return when the flower has faded. He realizes that this means that he will see her again the following day. Alone, Violetta is torn by conflicting emotions—she doesn't want to give up her way of life, but, at the same time, she feels that Alfredo has awakened her desire to be truly loved.

#### Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 8:05PM)

#### Act II

Violetta has chosen a life with Alfredo, and they enjoy their love in the country, far from society. When Alfredo finds out that this is only possible because Violetta has been selling her property, he immediately leaves for Paris to procure money. Violetta has received an invitation to a masked ball at Flora's home, but she no longer cares for such distractions. In Alfredo's absence, his father, Giorgio Germont, pays her a visit. He demands that she separate from his son as their relationship threatens his young daughter's impending marriage. But over the course of their conversation, Germont comes to realize that Violetta is not after his son's money—she is a woman who loves unselfishly. He appeals to Violetta's generosity of spirit and explains that, from a bourgeois point of view, her liaison with Alfredo has no future. Violetta's resistance dwindles, and she finally agrees to leave Alfredo forever. Only after her death shall he learn the truth about why she returned to her old life. She accepts the invitation to the ball and writes a goodbye letter to her lover. Alfredo returns, and Violetta tearfully hurries away. Soon after, a messenger delivers Violetta's letter, and while Alfredo is reading it, his father appears. He exhorts his son to return to their native land, but all the memories of home and a happy family can't prevent the furious and jealous Alfredo from seeking revenge for Violetta's apparent betrayal.

At the masked ball, news has spread of Violetta and Alfredo's separation. Eventually, Alfredo arrives, followed soon after by Violetta and her new lover, Baron Douphol. Alfredo and the baron battle at the gaming table, and Alfredo wins a fortune: lucky at cards, unlucky in love. When everybody has withdrawn, Alfredo confronts Violetta, who claims to be truly in love with the baron. In his rage, Alfredo calls the guests as witnesses and declares that he now repays Violetta for her time with him, throwing his winnings at her. She collapses in shock. Giorgio Germont, who has witnessed the scene, rebukes his now-penitent son for his behavior. Violetta says that, one day, Alfredo will understand her actions.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:30PM)

### Act III

Back in her home in Paris, Violetta is dying. Her last remaining friend, Dr. Grenvil, knows that she has only a few more hours to live. Alfredo's father has written to Violetta, informing her that his son was not injured in his duel with Douphol. Full of remorse, Germont has told his son about Violetta's sacrifice. Alfredo wants to rejoin her as soon as possible. Violetta is afraid that he might be too late. The sounds of celebrations are heard outside while she is in mortal agony. Alfredo finally arrives, and though their reunion fills Violetta with renewed joy, she realizes that even his return is not enough to save her. Giorgio Germont arrives, and as death approaches, Violetta bids Alfredo to keep her memory alive. Suddenly, all sorrow and suffering miraculously seem to leave her—a final illusion before death claims her.



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#### ALSO ON STAGE



#### GAETANO DONIZETTI

# L'ELISIR D'AMORE

Sparks fly as soprano Golda Schultz and tenor Javier Camarena star as the lovers Adina and Nemorino in Donizetti's classic bel canto comedy. Maestro Michele Gamba makes his debut leading a cast that also features baritone Ambrogio Maestri as Dr. Dulcamara and baritone Davide Luciano and bass-baritone Michael Sumuel as Sgt. Belcore.

JAN 10, 13, 17, 21 mat, 24, 27

Tickets from \$25 | metopera.org

## In Focus

# Giuseppe Verdi La Traviata

#### Premiere: Teatro La Fenice, Venice, 1853

Verdi's *La Traviata* survived a notoriously unsuccessful opening night to become one of the best-loved operas in the repertoire. Following the larger-scale dramas of *Rigoletto* and *II Trovatore*, its intimate scope and subject matter inspired the composer to create some of his most profound and heartfelt music. The title role of the "fallen woman" is considered a pinnacle of the soprano repertoire, capturing the imaginations of audiences and performers alike with its inexhaustible vocal and dramatic possibilities.

#### The Creators

In a remarkable career spanning six decades in the theater, Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) composed 26 operas, at least half of which are at the core of today's repertoire. His role in Italy's cultural and political development has made him an icon in his native country. Francesco Maria Piave (1810–76), Verdi's librettist for *La Traviata*, collaborated with him on ten works, including *Ernani*, *Rigoletto*, *La Forza del Destino*, and the original versions of *Macbeth* and *Simon Boccanegra*. Alexandre Dumas fils (1824–95) was the son of the author of *The Three Musketeers*. His play *La Dame aux Camélias* (*The Lady of the Camellias*), which Verdi adapted into *La Traviata*, is based on Dumas's own, semi-autobiographical novel of the same name.

#### The Setting

With La Traviata, Verdi and Piave fashioned an opera from a play set in contemporary times—an anomaly in the composer's long career. Dumas's La Dame aux Camélias was a meditation on (and reinterpretation of) the author's youthful affair with the celebrated courtesan Marie Duplessis, known as a sophisticated and well-read woman whose charms and tact far surpassed her station.

#### The Music

Verdi's musical-dramatic ability to portray the individual in a marginalized relationship to society keeps this work a mainstay on the world's stages according to popular lore, for the last one hundred years, there has been at least one performance of *La Traviata* somewhere in the world every single night. The vocal and emotional scope of the title character is enormous: Compare the defiant fireworks in the showstopping Act I aria "Sempre libera degg'io" to the haunting regret of Act III's "Addio, del passato." The dramatic demands continue in Violetta's interactions with others, most notably in the extended Act II confrontation with her lover's father, Germont. Often cited as the emotional core of *La Traviata*, it is one of the most resoundingly truthful scenes in opera. Germont embodies the double-faced morality of the bourgeoisie, and Violetta's interactions with him parallel her precarious dealings with society in general. She begins with defiance, becomes desperate, and finishes defeated. It is a vast journey within a single scene.

#### Met History

La Traviata was first performed at the Met within a month of the company's opening in 1883 but then was retired during a subsequent all-German period. After returning to the schedule in 1892, it has since been performed more than a thousand times. The company introduced notable productions in 1921, designed by architectural legend Joseph Urban; 1935, choreographed by George Balanchine; 1957, directed by Tyrone Guthrie; and 1966, directed by Alfred Lunt. Franco Zeffirelli created two stagings for the company, one in 1989 and another in 1998. New Year's Eve 2010 saw the premiere of a bold new production by Willy Decker. On December 4, 2018, Yannick Nézet-Séguin-in his first performance as the Met's Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer Music Directorled the premiere of a new staging by Michael Mayer. The roster of artists who have appeared in the opera's three principal roles at the Met reads like a who's who of generations of great singers. Licia Albanese holds the record for the most performances of Violetta at the Met (87), followed by American beauty Anna Moffo (80) and Spanish femme fatale Lucrezia Bori (58). Renée Fleming, Angela Gheorghiu, Natalie Dessay, Sonya Yoncheva, Diana Damrau, Aleksandra Kurzak, and Lisette Oropesa have been among the notable recent interpreters of this timeless role.

#### **Program Note**

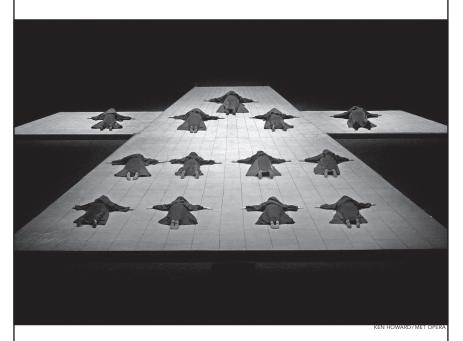
Perdi was still working on *II Trovatore* when he began *La Traviata* in 1852, and they are as different as chalk from cheese. The three great operas that mark his mid-century maturation (*Rigoletto*, *II Trovatore*, and *La Traviata*) all feature complex and colorful orchestration and a more advanced tonal language, but each is molded to its individual dramatic requirements. In *La Traviata*, the result is an appealing intimacy of tone, an exploration in music of the vulnerable human heart.

But in 1851, when the composer was first approached about an opera for the 1853 carnival season at Venice's Teatro La Fenice, he dragged his feet and set conditions. He wanted a "donna di prima forza," or bravura soprano (not at all suitable for the future Violetta), before he would put pen to paper, and he was picky about the story: "I don't want any of these ordinary subjects which crop up by the hundreds," he wrote. Eventually, after several rejected suggestions, Verdi found his inspiration: Alexandre Dumas fils's play (adapted from that author's earlier novel of the same name) *La Dame aux Camélias*. On New Year's Day 1853, Verdi wrote to his friend Cesare De Sanctis, saying, "For Venice, I'm doing *La Dame aux Camélias* which will probably be called *La Traviata* [*The Fallen Woman*]. A subject for our own age. Another composer wouldn't have done it because of the costumes, the period, and a thousand other silly scruples. But I'm writing it with the greatest of pleasure."

A subject for the age, indeed: In the wake of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, a newly heterogeneous, parvenu Parisian society indulged in hedonism of every kind. The bourgeoisie claimed its right to privileges formerly reserved for the elite, and men and women alike were on the make. By the midcentury, prostitution was linked to the concept of modernity as part of burgeoning social mobility and opportunism in cities, far from the moral strictures in country villages. As Dumas fils observed in his 1842 *Streetwalkers, Lorettes* [middle-class kept women], *and Courtesans*, it was more profitable for a lower-class girl than factory work or shoplifting. If there was misery aplenty for lowly streetwalkers, the courtesans often lived lives of luxury. The real-life inspiration for Violetta was Marie Duplessis, and she was the mistress of, among others, Count Ferdinand Montguyon, Antoine Agenor de Guiche, the elderly Baltic German Count Gustav Ernst von Stackelberg, and Count Edouard de Perregaux, who eventually married her. She died in February 1847, at age 23, of tuberculosis.

Dumas had an affair in 1844–45 with Duplessis that ended badly. In a mixture of myth and the transformation of real life, he wrote his novel *La Dame aux Camélias* in 1848, then turned it into a drama in 1852. In the play, Dumas toned down the promiscuity of Marguerite (as Duplessis's stand-in was named), deleted the red camellia that was her code for menstruation and hence unavailability for lovemaking (the white camellia had the opposite meaning), and made her kinder, more loving, than her earlier incarnation. If Verdi and his librettist Francesco

#### ALSO ON STAGE



FRANCIS POULENC

# DIALOGUES DES CARMÉLITES

Soprano Ailyn Pérez stars as Blanche de la Force in Poulenc's drama about the power of faith in the face of terror. Bertrand de Billy conducts John Dexter's classic staging, which also features sopranos Christine Goerke and Sabine Devieilhe, mezzo-sopranos Jamie Barton and Alice Coote, tenor Piotr Buszewski, and bass-baritone Laurent Naouri.

JAN 15 mat, 18, 21, 25, 28 mat

Tickets from \$25 | metopera.org

Maria Piave are faithful to the play in many respects, they carry the idealization of their heroine Violetta Valéry much farther than Dumas did, and the results of their shared labors are greater by far than either the novel or the play.

For the premiere at La Fenice in 1853, Verdi argued for contemporary costumes and stage sets ("No wigs!," he insisted) but did not get his way. The opera was set back in time (ca. 1700), and the role of Violetta was sung by one Fanny Salvini-Donatelli, whose participation Verdi furiously opposed. Thirty-eight years old and stout, she did not make a convincing picture of a young consumptive; Verdi had requested a singer "with an elegant figure who is young and sings passionately." The fact that Germont was sung by Felice Varesi, not in prime voice at the end of his career, did not help either; he was replaced by Filippo Coletti in the revised version that followed in 1854. For the new staging, Verdi chose Maria Spezia, 13 years younger than Salvini-Donatelli and much slimmer.

In Verdi's music, Violetta is at the center of it all from the beginning: Take, for example, the divided high strings that bespeak her frailty in the opening orchestral prelude and the violins' lyrical melody that follows, evocative of her grace and sweetness. But she is also part of a glittering social scene. The music we hear in the beginning is borrowed in part from Verdi's 1841 opera Oberto, Conte di San Bonifacio, and it showcases Violetta's charming coguetry. When the partygoers call for a brindisi (drinking song), Alfredo obliges with one of the opera's most famous numbers, "Libiamo ne' lieti calici," to which Violetta responds in kind. Waltzes by the banda (the stage band playing music that the characters hear) are punctuated by Violetta's spell of faintness and Alfredo's concern. His declaration of love comes in the Act I duet "Un dì felice, eterea," remarkable for its directness of expression and its chamber-music quality. A similar intimacy marks his pizzicato-accompanied lyrical song "De' miei bollenti spiriti" at the start of Act II, although a fiery and conventional cabaletta, "Oh mio rimorso!," follows. When the partygoers depart the first act, Violetta sings the renowned cavatina-cabaletta paired arias that tell of her divided soul: the tender, loving creature who wants to believe the ardent young man ("Ah fors'è lui") and the pleasure-loving cocotte who would be "Sempre libera" ("Always free"), set to some of the most giddily febrile coloratura ever created.

The duet between Germont and Violetta in Act II is the heart of the opera. Here, Verdi moves from recitative (more speech-like) through arioso (a melodic style midway between recitative and aria) to the duet proper, beginning with Germont's "Pura siccome un angelo" and proceeding through seven sections in which Violetta traverses almost every tragic emotion possible. By the end of this complex scene, Germont has come to understand Violetta's true love for his son. He will display that understanding at the end of the act in the big ensemble finale, its climax the moment of outrage when Alfredo vents his unwarranted contempt for Violetta by throwing his winnings at her.



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PAUL SÁNCHEZ, PIANO

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 7:30PM Starr Theater, Alice Tully Hall

Presented in collaboration with the Metropolitan Opera

Baritone Will Liverman performs songs from his Grammy-nominated album *Dreams of a New Day* alongside pianist Paul Sánchez, showcasing the work of renowned Black composers across generations. The program concludes with a new piece, "Good-night," co-written by Liverman and Lady Jess, featuring Lady Jess on violin.

Tickets from \$30 | lincolncenter.org/WillLiverman

The Met ropolitan Opera

#### Program Note CONTINUED

The swooning and gradual, agonized revival of an unjustly accused heroine prompts what the scholar Julian Budden named "the groundswell effect," or the final emphatic passage in the slow concerted ensemble section of the finale. The father's sorrowful nobility, Alfredo's shame and confusion, and Violetta's pathos are each distinct in this ensemble, which ends with the kind of lyrical transfiguration that we expect from Verdi at such moments.

The divisi violins and the theme from the opera's opening bars return for the sick-room scene in Act III. Violetta reads Germont's letter, in which he promises to come see her, aloud, accompanied by tremolo solo strings and a melody for the violins. (Hollywood recognized the strength of this dramatic device and has borrowed it for many a movie.) In the dying Violetta's exquisite farewell to bygone days ("Addio, del passato"), the insistent pathos of the off-beat accents is evocative of sobbing. The instant when minor mode cedes to major mode is magical—but it cannot last. The Mardi Gras carnival chorus ("Largo al guadrupede") might be musically banal in the manner of all "carny music," but the contrast with Violetta's private agony is an undeniable coup de théâtre. The duet for Violetta and Alfredo that follows ("Parigi, o cara") returns us to the archetypal Traviata music in its sweet simplicity: This is the novelty of this opera. When Violetta tells Alfredo that if his return cannot restore her to health, nothing can prevent her from dying, the restraint of this guiet phrase, accompanied only by strings, is remarkable, more affecting than any breastbeating fury could possibly be. The lovers' despairing shared cabaletta ("Ah! Gran Dio! morir sì giovane") leads to Germont's entrance; he is now ready to claim Violetta as his daughter. The death scene, with its massed ensemble, is notable for an economy of scale that only magnifies its heartbreaking effect.

After a French revival of this opera in 1864 by impresario Léon Carvalho, Verdi was asked which of his operas thus far he liked best. He replied, "Speaking as a professional, *Rigoletto*, speaking as an amateur, *La Traviata*." Thereafter, this composer, who both adhered to Italy's operatic traditions and reinvented them throughout his long life, would avail himself of French grand opera traits, but *La Traviata* is sui generis in the way it speaks to the heart. No wonder that the "amateur" Verdi loved it, and so do we.

—Susan Youens

Susan Youens is the J. W. Van Gorkom Professor of Music at the University of Notre Dame and has written eight books on the music of Franz Schubert and Hugo Wolf.

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## The Cast



Marco Armiliato conductor (genoa, italy)

THIS SEASON La Traviata and Fedora at the Met, Rigoletto and Tosca at the Vienna State Opera, Fedora and Andrea Chénier at La Scala, Tosca at Staatsoper Berlin, Andrea Chénier in Monte Carlo, Macbeth in concert in Naples, and I Capuleti e i Montecchi in concert at the Salzburg Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 1998 debut leading La Bohème, he has conducted nearly 500 performances of 25 operas, including Turandot, Macbeth, La Fanciulla del West, Madama Butterfly, II Trovatore, Cyrano de Bergerac, Manon Lescaut, Aida, Anna Bolena, La Traviata, La Sonnambula, Tosca, Rigoletto, Francesca da Rimini, Ernani, II Barbiere di Siviglia, and La Fille du Régiment.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He appears regularly at the Vienna State Opera, where he has conducted L'Elisir d'Amore, Don Pasquale, La Bohème, Aida, Andrea Chénier, La Traviata, Samson et Dalila, Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Otello, La Fanciulla del West, and Turandot, among many others. Recent performances also include Turandot, La Traviata, Aida, Carmen, Cavalleria Rusticana, and Pagliacci in Verona; Ernani in Rome; Simon Boccanegra in Zurich; Tosca at Covent Garden and the Salzburg Festival; Norma in Madrid; and La Rondine in Florence.



Ermonela Jaho soprano (tirana, albania)

THIS SEASON Violetta in La Traviata at the Met, the title role of Adriana Lecouvreur in Salerno and at Opera Australia, Berlioz's Herminie with the Balthasar Neumann Orchestra, the title role of Suor Angelica in Barcelona, Liù in Turandot at Covent Garden, Blanche de la Force in Dialogues des Carmélites at the Bavarian State Opera, and concerts in Bilbao and Liège.

MET APPEARANCES Liù, Violetta (debut, 2008), and Cio-Cio-San in Madama Butterfly. CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Nedda in Pagliacci at Covent Garden; Cio-Cio-San in Madama Butterfly at the Bavarian State Opera, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, and in Hamburg; the title role of *Thaïs* in concert at Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Elysées; Liù in concert with the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia; Adriana Lecouvreur in Oviedo and at the Vienna State Opera; Mimì in *La Bohème* in Madrid; and Suor Angelica at the Bavarian State Opera. She has also appeared at the Greek National Opera, Staatsoper Berlin, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Paris Opera, La Scala, Dutch National Opera, Royal Swedish Opera, Spain's Castell de Peralada Festival, and in Naples, Verona, Lyon, Marseille, Orange, Brussels, Tirana, Buenos Aires, and Beijing, among others.

# The Cast CONTINUED



Amartuvshin Enkhbat baritone (sükhbaatar, mongolia)

THIS SEASON Germont in La Traviata for his debut at the Met; Don Carlo di Vargas in La Forza del Destino in Parma; Count di Luna in Il Trovatore in Florence; Germont, Alfio in Cavalleria Rusticana, and Tonio in Pagliacci at the Vienna State Opera; the title roles of Rigoletto and Nabucco at the Deutsche Oper Berlin; Rigoletto in Piacenza and Ferrara; Scarpia in Tosca in Genoa; Nabucco at the Bavarian State Opera; Carlo Gérard in Andrea Chénier and the title role of Macbeth at La Scala; and a concert with the Symphony Orchestra of the Balearic Islands.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Germont, Nabucco, Amonasro in Aida, Alfio, and Tonio in Verona; Rigoletto at La Scala and in Genoa, Liège, Florence, and Treviso; Don Carlo in *Ernani* in Las Palmas, at Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, and in concert in Parma; Scarpia in Palermo; Amonasro in Hamburg, Turin, Krasnoyarsk, and in concert at the Bavarian State Opera and La Scala; Miller in *Luisa Miller* in Rome; Nabucco at Covent Garden and in Valencia and Parma; Count Anckarström in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Parma; and Don Carlo di Vargas in Florence.



Ismael Jordi tenor (jerez de la frontera, spain)

THIS SEASON Alfredo in *La Traviata* for his debut at the Met, Percy in *Anna Bolena* in Valencia, the title role of *Roberto Devereux* in Seville, Roberto in *Maria Stuarda* at Dutch National Opera, and Javier in Moreno Torroba's *Luisa Fernanda* and a concert at Madrid's Teatro de la Zarzuela.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Percy at Dutch National Opera, Chevalier des Grieux in Manon in Jerez de la Frontera, Fernando Soler in Vives's Doña Francisquita in Valencia, and Gustavo in Guerrero's Los Gavilanes at the Teatro de la Zarzuela. He has also sung Fernando Soler in Jerez de la Frontera, Lausanne, and at the Teatro de la Zarzuela; Alfredo, the title role of Faust, and Edgardo in Lucia di Lammermoor at Madrid's Teatro Real; Fernand in Donizetti's La Favorite in Málaga; Edgardo in Monte Carlo, Bilbao, Zurich, Tokyo, and Covent Garden; the Duke of Mantua in Rigoletto in Zurich and Rome; Roméo in Roméo et Juliette in Montreal and at the Greek National Opera; Chevalier des Grieux at the Korea National Opera; Faust in Jerez de la Frontera; Percy in Avignon and Seville; and Nemorino in L'Elisir d'Amore in Strasbourg.