Anton Rubinstein’s

DEMON

Sosnoff Theater
July 27 – August 5, 2018
The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College
Chair Jeanne Donovan Fisher
President Leon Botstein
Executive Director Bob Bursey

presents

DEMON

By Anton Rubinstein
Libretto by Pavel Viskovatov (based on a poem by Mikhail Lermontov)

Director Thaddeus Strassberger
American Symphony Orchestra
Conductor Leon Botstein, Music Director
Bard Festival Chorale
Chorus Master James Bagwell
Pesvebi Georgian Dancers
Choreographer Shorena Barbakadze

Set Design Paul Tate dePoo III
Costume Design Kaye Voyce
Lighting Design JAX Messenger
Video Design Greg Emetaz
Hair and Makeup Design Anne Ford-Coates

Movement Director and Acting Coach Onofrio Colucci
Language Coach and Assistant Director Roza Tulyaganova
Assistant Director Jordan Fein

Sung in Russian, with English supertitles

Sosnoff Theater
July 27 at 8 pm
July 29, August 1, 3, and 5 at 2 pm

Running time is approximately three hours and 15 minutes, including two intermissions.

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

About The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College
The Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, an environment for world-class artistic presentation in the Hudson Valley, was designed by Frank Gehry and opened in 2003. Risk-taking performances and provocative programs take place in the 800-seat Sosnoff Theater, a proscenium-arch space, and in the 220-seat LUMA Theater, which features a flexible seating configuration. The Center is home to Bard College’s Theater & Performance and Dance Programs, and host to two annual summer festivals: SummerScape, which offers opera, dance, theater, film, and cabaret; and the Bard Music Festival, celebrating its 29th year. Last year’s festival was “Chopin and His World”; the 2018 festival is devoted to the life and work of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. The Center bears the name of the late Richard B. Fisher, former chair of Bard College’s Board of Trustees. The outstanding arts events that take place here would not be possible without the contributions made by the Friends of the Fisher Center. We are grateful for their support and welcome all donations.
Cast

Demon Efim Zavalny
Angel Nadezhda Babintseva
Tamara Olga Tolkmit
Gudal Andrey Valentii
Sinodal Alexander Nesterenko
Nanny Ekaterina Egorova
Old Servant Yakov Strizhak
Messenger Pavel Suliandziga

Synopsis

Anton Rubinstein’s *Demon* is set somewhere between heaven and hell. The central character—the Demon—is a fallen angel, condemned to spend eternity alone. He is visited by an Angel, who tries to save him, but he resists. The Demon falls in love with Prince Gudal’s daughter, Princess Tamara, who is betrothed to Prince Sinodal. Deeply jealous, the Demon kills Sinodal. Tamara escapes to a convent, but the Demon finds her, and implores her to love him. Tamara, yielding to temptation, dies after he kisses her. In the struggle for her soul, the Angel keeps the upper hand, for “he who loves belongs to paradise.”

Prologue

An epic storm ravages the landscape as the Demon fumes over his disillusionment: Human life is weak and insignificant, he finds no opposition to his power, and he sows evil with no sense of pleasure. An Angel appears and reminds the Demon that love can restore him to heaven, but the Demon rejects this notion.

Act 1

The Demon spies Tamara as she sings with friends on the banks of a river. She senses his presence and grows anxious, feeling oppressed by an unknown danger. When he appears, only she can see him. Alarmed by Tamara’s agitation, her Nanny approaches and the Demon disappears. Nanny assures her it was a dream, and distracts her with talk of her impending wedding.

Prince Sinodal’s caravan rides toward Prince Gudal’s castle, where he will marry Tamara. When their progress is impeded by an avalanche, they decide to set up camp for the night and toast the Prince on his upcoming wedding. The Old Servant advises the Prince to pray at the chapel for protection before retiring. The Prince says he will pray in the morning, and is lulled to sleep by the Demon. While asleep, the Prince and his retinue are viciously attacked by Tartars, and he is fatally wounded.

Intermission

Act 2

Family, friends, and political allies have gathered for Tamara’s wedding celebrations, which have already begun in anticipation of the arrival of Prince Sinodal. The tragic news of his fate interrupts the festivities and his body is brought in. In vain, Tamara attempts to revive the corpse, but when she cannot, she tears off her wedding attire. Her father tries to console her, but for her, only the tomb can unite her once again with her betrothed.

Tamara begs to be allowed to retire to a holy convent. Despite initially resisting, Gudal eventually reluctantly agrees. The family and guests vow to avenge those responsible for the brutal murder.

Intermission

Act 3

The Demon approaches the convent but the Angel bars his way, and warns him not to touch that which is dear to heaven. The Demon disregards the Angel and angrily enters the convent and finds Tamara. He confesses to her that he found all he sought before he was cast out of heaven, and implores her to understand his sorrow and suffering. Tamara feels compassion, but acknowledging her own frailty, asks him to forswear evil. Exhausted by her spiritual struggle, she begs him leave her. The Demon attempts yet again to convince her of the wondrous delights that await her if she will go away with him. Unable to withstand the Demon’s entreaties, she declares her love for him, which she seals with a kiss, and then dies.

Epilogue

The Angel appears to save Tamara’s soul and commands the Demon to be gone. Once more, the Demon finds himself abandoned and alone.

Chorus Festival Chorale
Chorus Master James Bagwell

Soprano
Wendy Baker, Megan Brunning,
Jennifer Gliere, Laura Green,
Sarah Griffths, Manami Hattori,
Chloe Holgate, Marie Mascari,
Caroline Miller, Ellen Taylor Sisson,
Elizabeth Smith, Martha Sullivan

Tenor
Sean Clark, Mark Donato,
Sean Fallen, John Cleveland Howell,
Chad Kranak, Eric William Lamp,
Mukund Marathe, Marc Molomot,
Nathan Siler, Michael Steinberger,
Kannan Vasudevan

Alto
Sarah Bleasdale, Katharine Emory,
Agueda Fernandez, B. J. Fredricks,
Jessica Kimple, Mary Marathe,
Martha Mechalakos, Guadalupe Peraza,
Heather Petrie, Elizabeth Picker,
AnnMarie Sandy, Abigail Wright

Bass
David Baldwin, Blake Burroughs,
Daniel Hoy, Aaron Ingersoll,
Andrew Martens, Thomas McCargar,
Brian Mummert, Mark Rehnstrom,
Michael Riley, Aaron Theno,
Peter Van Derick
Pesvebi Georgian Dancers
Dea Abjandaze, Victoria Baiardi, Ani Bidzinashvili, George Godesdzishvili, Mariami Goderdzishvili, Lasha Khajalia, Lasha Khurtidze, Nodar Marjanidze, Nodar Murusidze, Nino Nadareishvili, Raul Nadirashvili, Elene Shavashidze, Giorgi Togonidze, Mariam Tsertsvadze

Principal Music Coach David Sytkowski
Assistant Conductor Zachary Schwartzman
Choral Contractor Nancy Wertsch
Assistant Chorus Master Jackson McKinnon
Rehearsal Pianist Bethany Pietroniro

Producer Nunally Kersh
Stage Manager Lynn Krynicki
Assistant Stage Manager Michelle Elia
Assistant Stage Manager Tracy D. Hofmann
Associate Costume Designer Candida Nichols
Assistant Lighting Designer Henry Wilen
Assistant Costume Designer Amanda Gladu
Stage Management Interns Nayah Reels, Alina Ushakova

Transliteration Yelena Kurdina
Supertitle Creation Celeste Montemarano
Supertitle Operator Lisa Jablow

Scenery constructed by TTS Scenery, Charleston, South Carolina, and Global Scenic Services, Bridgeport, Connecticut
Costumes built by Bethany Joy Costumes, Colin Davis Jones Studio, Eric Winterling, Inc., Ann Morin (milliner), all of New York City; and Samoseli Pirveli, Tbilisi, Georgia

Makeup provided by MAC Cosmetics
Lighting provided by 4Wall Entertainment, Moonachie, New Jersey

Opera Note
By Emily Frey

It is easy to imagine what an 1871 opera based on Mikhail Lermontov’s The Demon ought to sound like. Lermontov’s narrative poem is set in Georgia and subtitled An Eastern Story; the poem’s many lyrical digressions on the Caucasus and its people provide composers with every excuse to furnish a smorgasbord of crowd-pleasing musical exotica. The Demon also features a supernatural antihero, whose devilish exploits earned the poem a tortuous journey through the religious censor’s office. Here, too, 19th-century opera provided clear precedents: a fantastic menace like Lermontov’s title character all but demanded to be tricked out in hair-raising, harmonic novelty.

One could be forgiven for expecting an operatic adaptation of The Demon to sound like a mash-up of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Borodin’s greatest hits—overflowing with audacious harmonies, reedy timbres, and feats of extravagant melisma. That is exactly what critics did expect when they went to see Anton Rubinstein’s adaptation of Demon in 1875. The “Eastern” elements were dependably in place, although confined to divertissements (choruses and dances) and the serpentine vocal lines of Prince Sinodal, the Demon’s romantic rival, who fails to survive the only scene in which he appears. But where was the supernatural in the work Rubinstein labeled a “fantastic opera”? César Cui, the least distinguished composer and most determined critic among the Mighty Five (a group of nationalist composers that also included Mily Balakirev, Modest Mussorgsky, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakov), could identify only one fleeting musical moment that fit the “fantastic” bill. Meanwhile, the opera’s grand finale—in which the Demon infiltrates a nunner— seemed to Cui nothing short of absurd, for it referenced a style of music that was anything but demoniacal. The critic noted snidely that Rubinstein’s finale was “composed from a variety of romances”—the romance being a modest song genre that struck a balance between the folksy and the cosmopolitan, combining traditionally “Russian” melodic elements with Western-style harmonization and light accompaniment. An eminently commercial genre, the Russian romance was associated above all with amateur performance in middle-class homes. In the finale of Demon, then, with the dramatic stakes eschatologically high, Rubinstein had supplied—salon music. Cui’s final judgment of Demon was appropriately damning: “This opera is altogether ordinary and inspires little desire to see it a second time.”

Audiences disagreed. Demon became the most popular Russian opera of the 1870s (a decade that saw the premieres of both Boris Godunov and Eugene Onegin), racking up more than 100 stagings in both St. Petersburg and Moscow before being exported to Paris, London, Köln, and eventually, New York. Cui was on to something, however, in asserting that Rubinstein had made Demon “ordinary.” Opera has a way of inflating the life-sized into the grandiose, but Rubinstein’s adaptation of Demon did the opposite to Lermontov’s title character. A descendant of Faust, Milton’s Lucifer, and the various Promethei of English Romanticism, Lermontov’s Demon is a titanic figure whose revolt—against an austere God who seeks obedience rather than love—is more to be marveled at than identified with. His motivations are powerful but often obscure (“And on his lofty brow / Nothing registered,” writes Lermontov at the end of the third stanza), and his love for Princess Tamara, dependent on her beauty alone, seems
unlikely to endure. The opera’s libretto, concocted by Lermontov scholar Pavel Viskovatov, filled in many of the character’s psychological gaps. Far more than his literary precursor, the operatic Demon is an intensely emotional being for whom static, heavenly bliss seems a torment. He wants to be human, not immortal, and his rebellion is not simply born of boredom, as it is in Lermontov’s poem. Rather, it stems from his desire to experience all human feelings, not just the tranquil ones. “What is the radiance of eternal power to me?” Rubinstein’s Demon asks. “What is holy paradise? I want freedom and passion, not peace.” The opera also adds depth to the Demon’s infatuation with Tamara, for here it is not only her appearance that attracts him. Spying Tamara among a group of girlfriends, the Demon muses: “Yes, like them, she is beautiful—but not passionless, like they are!” Passion, once again, is what this Demon craves, and passion is what distinguishes him from all the other characters save Tamara. Psychologically speaking, the literary Demon had been something of a sphinx; his operatic counterpart has legible emotions that are aired at length.

In a word, then, the opera humanizes its protagonist. If Lermontov’s Demon had been an archetypal Romantic genius—Prometheus with a Russian accent—Rubinstein’s was a devil made for the Age of Realism, a life-sized and relatable fiend. (Rubinstein was not the only Russian of that era to cut the devil down to size, as readers of Dostoevsky’s Demons and The Brothers Karamazov can attest.) Viewed from this angle, the opera’s frequent reference to the domestic romance, that most “ordinary” of musical idioms, seems not so absurd as Cui had alleged. Addressing each other through a series of romances (pumped up for the opera stage, but still recognizable as such), the Demon and Tamara communicate their real feelings through music that Rubinstein’s 19th-century Russian audience could identify as coming from real life. That association, between the music of the opera and that of the contemporary Russian home, might help to account for why Demon never really succeeded as an export item, despite its enormous popularity within Russia. Describing the opera’s poor reviews in the London press, Rubinstein’s American biographer posited in 1939: “[It] needed Russian listeners, credulous as children, who could accept a demon lover on the stage.” Maybe not all of this is nonsense—though it hardly taxes the intellect to remember many sillier things that Western opera audiences have accepted. (A magic helmet that can change a giant into a dragon comes to mind.) But perhaps Demon did need Russian listeners, who lived their daily lives to the soundtrack of the domestic romance—the “ordinary” genre that, in Rubinstein’s most popular Russian opera, comes to serve as the language of authentic feeling.

In Tolstoy’s What Is Art? (1897), the aging writer argues that what separates good art from bad is social function: good art unites, bad art divides, and so for art to be good it has to be above all accessible. Twenty years earlier, the music critic Herman Laroche described Rubinstein in proto-Tolstoyan terms: “Rubinstein addresses himself to the masses, speaking in terms that are simple and understandable, and meets with a sympathetic response.” The word “sympathetic” gets Rubinstein’s procedures in Demon just about right. That opera is one of Rubinstein’s most sympathetic creations, connecting the feeling beings on both sides of the auditorium through the “ordinary” language of domestic song.

Emily Frey holds a PhD in musicology from University of California, Berkeley, and is visiting assistant professor of Russian at Swarthmore College.

### Director’s Note

**By Thaddeus Strassberger**

As Mikhail Lermontov’s poem is well known in Russia, Rubinstein’s opera can devote more time to the psychological exploration of the characters and abandon many of the conventions of 19th-century narrative. The poem itself is meant to be remote and far away in time and place. The preface specifies, “Many years have passed since events recorded. Everywhere is ruin and only tradition remains.” Lermontov created—and Rubinstein interpreted—an intense portrait of a young woman’s distress, while confronting the societal conventions surrounding her free will and sexuality.

This production picks up the story out of order, beginning with the events that end Part 1 of the poem. Princess Tamara, caught in a vortex of devastating memories, regret, lost chances, and missed opportunities, recalls the preceding events in a cyclical flashback as she struggles to come to terms with her own Demon. Inspiration abounds in the lyrical tale filled with vivid visual references that wrap each image in mysterious symbolism and evocative metaphor:

**The Demon**

Translated by Robert Burness

Excerpt from Part 2

1. Oh, to some holy Convent send me, 
Bid thine infatuate daughter go 
Where the Redeemer will defend me 
And grant me solace in my woe.

2. To lonely Convent far from thence 
Her parents led her forth, and bound 
A sackcloth garb of penitence 
Her guiltless maiden bosom round. 

But in the cloister garb she wore, 
As erst in queenly robes arrayed. 

The quivering heart-strings of the maid 
Throbbed with wild fancies as before. 

And when the altar tapers shone, 
And when the hymn of praise ascended, 
Even with the words of prayer was blended 
The haunting voice she once had known. 

And when the filmy cloud of incense 
Rose to the chapel’s vaulted dome, 
A consciousness would ever come 
That voiceless, traceless, some dim Presence, 
Still as a star, before her there 
Stood beckoning her—she knew not where.
Thaddeus Strassberger  Director
Thaddeus Strassberger returns to Bard SummerScape this year for his sixth new Bard production. Previous productions include: Les Huguenots, Der ferne Klang, Oresteia, Le roi malgré lui, and The Wreckers. Recent notable productions include: I due Foscari (Covent Garden), Nabucco (LA Opera), both starring Plácido Domingo; and JFK. Strassberger has directed several productions in Russia including Satyagraha, in Ekaterinburg, where he also directed The Passenger (Russian premiere in coproduction with the Bolshoi in Moscow) and Martinů’s A Greek Passion, in a new Russian translation. He has created productions for Den Norske Opera, Theater an der Wien, Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden, Staatstheater Braunschweig, Tiroler Landestheater Innsbruck, Washington National Opera, Philadelphia Opera, Minnesota Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Wexford Festival Opera, Palau de las Arts, and L’opera de Montreal, among others. Upcoming productions include Carmen (Danish National Opera) and La Clemenza di Tito (LA Opera).

Leon Botstein  Conductor
Leon Botstein is music director and principal conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra, founder and music director of The Orchestra Now, artistic codirector of Bard SummerScape and the Bard Music Festival, and conductor laureate of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, where he served as music director from 2003–11. He has been guest conductor with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Aspen Music Festival, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Mariinsky Theatre, Russian National Orchestra in Moscow, Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden, Taipei Symphony, Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra, and Sinfónica Juvenil de Caracas in Venezuela, among others. This summer he assumed artistic directorship of the Grafenegg Academy in Austria. Recordings include a Grammy-nominated recording of Popov’s First Symphony with the London Symphony Orchestra, an acclaimed recording of Hindemith’s The Long Christmas Dinner with the American Symphony Orchestra, and recordings with the London Philharmonic, NDR Orchestra Hamburg, the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, and The Orchestra Now, among others. Many of his live performances with the American Symphony Orchestra are available online. He is the editor of The Musical Quarterly and the author of numerous articles and books, including The Compleat Brahms (Norton), Jefferson’s Children (Doubleday), Judentum und Modernität (Bölaus), and Von Beethoven zu Berg (Zsolnay). Honors include Harvard University’s prestigious Centennial Award, the American Academy of Arts and Letters award, and the Cross of Honor, First Class, from the government of Austria, for his contributions to music. Other recent distinctions include the Bruckner Society’s Julio Kilényi Medal of Honor for his interpretations of that composer’s music, the Leonard Bernstein Award for the Elevation of Music in Society, and Carnegie Foundation’s Academic Leadership Award. In 2011, he was inducted into the American Philosophical Society.

CREATIVE TEAM

Paul Tate dePoo III  Scenic Design
Paul Tate dePoo III is an international scenic and production designer and the founder of Tate Design Group in New York City. Recent and upcoming credits include: Turandot, Santa Fe Opera; Così fan tutte, Boston Lyric Opera; Trouble in Tahiti, Curtis Opera; Dr. Atomic, Impressions of Pelléas, Don Giovanni, Alcina, Orlando (R. B. Schlather), Asolo Rep; Josephine, EVITA, Goodspeed Opera; Thoroughly Modern Millie, a Sign of the Times, Guys and Dolls, Seoul, Korea; Titanic, Signature Theatre; Grand Hotel, A Little Night Music, Titanic, Crazy for You, MUNY; Centennial Opening Ceremony, Singin’ in the Rain, Jesus Christ Superstar, Jersey Boys, Unsinkable Molly Brown, Yale; Rocky Horror, Boston Opera House; TED Talks, Shubert Theatre; Show Boat, Delaware Theatre Company; A Sign of the Times, War of the Roses, Capital Rep; Assisted Living, Blue Sky Boys, 4000 Miles, Other Desert Cities, Christmas Carol, Smokey Joe’s Cafe, as well as such off-Broadway productions as Romance Language, Pageant, Sex of the Baby, and Look Upon Our Lowliness.

Kaye Voyce  Costume Designer
Kaye Voyce’s work on Broadway includes Significant Other, The Real Thing, The Realistic Joneses, and Shining City. Recent work includes: Harry Clarke (Vineyard); Office Hour, Hamlet (Public Theater); Measure for Measure (Elevator Repair Service/Public Theater); After the Blast (LCT3); War Stories (Opera Philadelphia); The Summer King (Pittsburgh Opera, world premiere); The Antipodes (Signature Theatre); Endgame (Long Wharf); Revolt, She Said. Revolt Again (SoHo Rep); Signature Plays, The Wayside Motor Inn (Signature Theatre); Indian Summer and Detroit (Playwrights Horizons); The Mystery of Love & Sex, and 4000 Miles (Lincoln Center Theater); Il Turco in Italia (Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, Opera Dijon, Teatro Regio Torino, and Teatr Wielki, Warsaw); Trisha Brown’s final two dances: Rogues and Toss; and many collaborations with Richard Maxwell/New York City Players.

JAX Messenger  Lighting Designer
JAX Messenger maintains a successful career as lighting designer for opera, theater, dance, and themed environments. He has lit productions for such companies as Pioneer Theatre ( / i ); Minnesota Opera (Dead Man Walking); Austin Lyric Opera (Carmen); Opera Philadelphia (Wake World); Curtis Institute of Music (Dr. Atomic, Impressions of Pelléas); Canadian Opera Company (Pyramus and Thisbe); Boston Lyric Opera (In the Penal Colony); Bard SummerScape (Oresteia, The Wreckers, The Turandot Project); China’s Wanda Culture Industry Group (Princess Butterfly); Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo (Laurence, Waltzpurpinsnacht, Majissimas); Merola Opera (Barber of Seville, Transformations); Washington Ballet (Sleeping Beauty, Fluctuating Hemlines, Shostakovich Concerto, Don Quixote); and San Francisco Opera (Requiem, The Elixir of Love for Families); among others. Upcoming projects include: Orphée (director Joel Ivey, Opera Columbus, Against the Grain Theatre, Banff Art Center) and Così fan tutte (director R. B. Schlather, Santa Fe Opera).
Greg Emetaz Video Design
Greg Emetaz is a filmmaker and video designer based in New York City. Recent stage productions include the world premieres of Bel Canto at Chicago Lyric Opera, Dolores Claiborne at San Francisco Opera, An American Soldier, Shalimar, 27, Champion, and The Golden Ticket at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. His work for the screen includes the feature film Camp Wedding as well as short films Bowes Academy (North Carolina Gay & Lesbian Film Festival jury award), Spell Claire, Get the F K Outta Paris!, Death by Omelette (Prix SNCF du Polar finalist) and web series Do it Yourselfie (Friars Club special jury award, ITVFest Best Director Award), codirected with Amanda DeSimone. He has also created behind-the-scenes documentaries for Julie Taymor’s The Tempest, Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark, and numerous productions at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

Anne Ford-Coates Hair and Makeup Design
Recent credits include makeup design for Frozen, A Bronx Tale, On Your Feet!, Disaster!, It Shoulda Been You, and On the Twentieth Century; on Broadway: hair and makeup design for The Wolves at Playwrights Realm and Lincoln Center; Mary Page Marlowe for Second Stage Theater; Sandbox, Drowning, and Funnyhouse of a Negro for Signature Theatre; Fellow Travelers for Prototype Festival; Guilty Mother for On Site Opera; Dead Man Walking for Washington National Opera; and Sweeney Todd and Silent Night for Atlanta Opera. Ford-Coates has designed hundreds of operas, musicals, and plays. Favorites include Orphée, Lost in the Stars, and Candide for the Glimmerglass Festival; Little Dancer for the Kennedy Center; Music Man for the Royal Opera House Muscat in Oman; Twelfth Night for Shakespeare Theatre Company; The Thomasehfsky Project for PBS; Dog Days for PROTOTYPE Festival; Nabucco, Show Boat, Appomattox, and Wagner’s Ring Cycle for Washington National Opera.

Onofrio Colucci Acting Coach/Movement Director
Onofrio Colucci studied dance from a young age and then studied architecture while exploring physical theater with Russian Company DEREVO in Dresden (DDR). He has toured with award-winning shows across Europe, including Slava Polunin and his Slava Snow Show playing the main role in more than 45 countries. Other performing experience includes multiple productions with Cirque du Soleil in Las Vegas, Macao, and Tokyo. Colucci has also worked as a director, coach, and manager. He is also artistic director of Le Cirque: With the World’s Top Performers. With Demon, Colucci again collaborates with the director Thaddeus Strassberger after their successful collaboration on Weinberg’s The Passenger in Ekaterinburg, Russia.

CAST

Efim Zavalny Demon
Efim Zavalny graduated from Komi Republic College of Arts, Russia, received his master’s degree at Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, and continued his education at Elena Obraztsova International Music Academy under Vladimir Vaneev. He started his career at Komi Opera and Ballet Theatre as Onegin in Eugene Onegin, Muzgir in The Snow Maiden, and Prince Orlofsky in Die Fledermaus. Since 2016, he has been a soloist at Mariinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg, where his roles include Angelotti in Tosca, Paolo in Simon Boccanegra, Bonze in Madama Butterfly, Ping in Turandot, Moralès in Carmen, and Michonnet in Adriana Lecouvreur. The singer’s repertoire also includes the title role in Don Giovanni, Ibn-Hakia in Iolanta, and Aleko in Aleko. Zavalny has won prizes at several international competitions including International Boris Shtokolov Vocalists’ Competition (St. Petersburg, 2014, first prize) and the fifth International Georgy Sviridov Chamber Singing Competition (Kursk, 2014, 2nd prize). He is the recipient of the Komi Republic Governmental Award for Dramaturgy and Performing Arts (2013).

Nadezhda Babintseva Angel
Nadezhda Babintseva is a soloist of the Perm Opera and Ballet Theatre and Yekaterinburg State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, Russia. After graduating from the Urals Mussorgsky State Conservatory, where she studied under Nikolai Golyshev, she performed numerous roles with Perm Opera including Jeanne d’Arc in Maid of Orleans, Cléopâtre in Massenet’s Cléopâtre, Prince in Massenet’s Cendrillon, La Musica in Monteverdi’s L’Orfeo. She has also taken part in international projects with the Perm Opera, singing the title role in Carmen and Lola in Cavalleria rusticana in Craiova (Romania), and at music festivals in Germany and Finland. In 2008, she performed at Carnegie Hall as part of the Perm troupe. In Ekaterinburg, she performs Marfa in khovanschina, Olga in Eugene Onegin, Polina in The Queen of Spades, Ley in The Snow Maiden, Cherubino in Le nozze di Figaro, Lubasha in The Tsar’s Bride, Yaroslava in Prince Igor, Liza in The Passenger, Kasturbai in Satyagraha. She has won awards at the Glinka International Vocal Competition in Chelyabinsk and as well as in Perm for her interpretation of Bradamante in Alcina and Death in Le rassignol. Babintseva was nominated for the Golden Mask in 2010 for her work in Cherubino.
Lauded by the Financial Times for her “resonant, bright-voiced soprano,” Olga Tolkmit, who sang Xenia in the 2017 Bard SummerScape production of Dimitrij, returns to Bard for her third production. Other roles in 2017–18 include her first performances of Maria in Mazeppa at Helikon Opera as well as reprising her acclaimed performances of Liu in Turandot, Tatyana in Eugene Onegin, and Nedda in Pagliacci. She was recently a member of the ensemble of the Mikhailovsky Theatre where her roles included the title role of Iolanta, Mimi in La bohème, and Gianetta in Lelisir d’amore. Other roles from previous seasons include Tatyana in Eugene Onegin, Prilepa in Pikovaya Dama, and Brigitta in Iolanta. Her performances of Mimi in 2012 garnered a nomination for the prestigious Golden Mask Award. The soprano made her American debut in 2013 as Electra in Sergei Taneyev’s Oresteia at Bard SummerScape, a recording of which is available via the American’s Symphony Orchestra’s private label, The Orchard. Also last season, she sang solo performances of arias and songs of Handel, Bach, Schubert, and Giordani on a tour to cities throughout Japan. Tolkmit was a finalist in the 2011 Elena Obraztsova International Competition for Young Opera Singers, and holds a degree from the Rimsky-Korsakov St. Petersburg State Conservatory.

Olga Tolkmit Tamara

Recent and upcoming roles include Prince Ivan Khovansky in Khovanshchina (Stanislavsky Theatre Moscow), Gremin in Eugene Onegin (Astrakhan, Russia, and Minsk), Zaccaria in Nabucco (Kazan), King Rene in Iolanta, Sobakin in The Tsar’s Bride, Galitsky in Prince Igor, Timur in Turandot, Ramfis in Aida, and Sarastro in Die Zauberflöte (Minsk), among others. Valenti made his professional debut at the Bolshoi in 2005 as Mussorgsky’s Children of Rosenthal. He has since performed in Nabucco, War and Peace, Boris Godunov, Queen of Spades, Turandot, and The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh. He has also appeared at the Savonlinna Festival, Finland, Ljubljana Music Festival, Slovenia, and Teatro alla Scala, Milan. Since 2009, Valenti has been soloist of the ensemble of National Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus. His operatic repertoire comprises Zaccaria in Nabucco, Gremin in Eugene Onegin, Basilio in The Barber of Seville, Sobakin in The Tsar’s Bride, Colline in La bohème, King Rene in Iolanta, Grandfather Frost in Rimsky-Korsakov’s The Snow Maiden, Dosifej in Khovanshchina, Ramfis in Aida, Galitsky in Prince Igor, and Timur in Turandot, among others. A guest soloist at Mikhailovsky Theatre, St. Petersburg, he performed Gremin in Eugene Onegin and King Rene in Iolanta.

Andrey Valenti Prince Gudal

Recent and upcoming roles include Prince Ivan Khovansky in Khovanshchina (Stanislavsky Theatre Moscow), Gremin in Eugene Onegin (Astrakhan, Russia, and Minsk), Zaccaria in Nabucco (Kazan), King Rene in Iolanta, Sobakin in The Tsar’s Bride, Galitsky in Prince Igor, Timur in Turandot, Ramfis in Aida, and Sarastro in Die Zauberflöte (Minsk), among others. Valenti made his professional debut at the Bolshoi in 2005 as Mussorgsky’s Children of Rosenthal. He has since performed in Nabucco, War and Peace, Boris Godunov, Queen of Spades, Turandot, and The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh. He has also appeared at the Savonlinna Festival, Finland, Ljubljana Music Festival, Slovenia, and Teatro alla Scala, Milan. Since 2009, Valenti has been soloist of the ensemble of National Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus. His operatic repertoire comprises Zaccaria in Nabucco, Gremin in Eugene Onegin, Basilio in The Barber of Seville, Sobakin in The Tsar’s Bride, Colline in La bohème, King Rene in Iolanta, Grandfather Frost in Rimsky-Korsakov’s The Snow Maiden, Dosifej in Khovanshchina, Ramfis in Aida, Galitsky in Prince Igor, and Timur in Turandot, among others. A guest soloist at Mikhailovsky Theatre, St. Petersburg, he performed Gremin in Eugene Onegin and King Rene in Iolanta.

Alexander Nesterenko Prince Sinodal

Alexander Nesterenko graduated from the Mineralovodsk College of Music (class of A. Dorofeev) and continued his education at Rostov State Conservatory. As a student he became a soloist of the Piatigorsky operetta theater, where he performed Alfredo in La Traviata, Boniface in The Dinner Party with Italians by Offenbach, and Alfred in Die Fledermaus. From 2011 to 2014, he was a soloist of the Rostov State Musical Theatre. His repertoire included Alfredo in La Traviata, the title role in Faust by Gounod, Hussar in Stravinsky’s Mavra, the title role in Lehár’s Paganini, Almerik in Iolanta, Borsa in Rigoletto, and Ovlur in Prince Igor. In 2014 he joined the Stanislavsky Opera in Moscow where he performs Lensky in Eugene Onegin, Rodolfo in La bohème, Alfredo in La Traviata, Lord Arturo Bucklaw in Lucia di Lammermoor, Le Chevalier des Grieux in Manon, and the Prince in The Love for Three Oranges. Nesterenko was a finalist of the fifth International Opera Singers Competition of Galina Vishnevskaya (special jury prize).

Ekaterina Egorova Nanny

Recent and upcoming roles include the Countess in Queen of Spades, Spring Beauty in the concert performance of The Snow Maiden, Kabanicha in Kát’a Kabanov, Ulrica in Un Ballo in maschera, Marcellina in The Marriage of Figaro at Mikhailovsky Theatre, Rossweisse in Die Walküre in Theatre du Capitole Toulouse. Egorova’s operatic repertoire comprises Marta in Iolanta and Lyubasha in The Tsar’s Bride at State Opera and Ballet Theatre of the St. Petersburg Conservatory and Mikhailovsky Theatre, Konchakovna in Prince Igor, Maddalena in Rigoletto, Flora in La Traviata, Siébel in Faust, Carmen, Lola in Cavalleria rusticana, Larina in Eugene Onegin, Polina and Milozor in Queen of Spades alongside Elena Obraztsova, and Ježibaba in Rusalka at Mikhailovsky Theatre. She has also performed Prince Orlofsky in Die Fledermaus, Zelilla in Kalman’s Silvia, and Varvara in Kát’a Kabanov at Mikhailovsky Theatre, Amneris in Aida, Marina Mniszech in Mussorgsky’s Boris Godunov, Fenena in Nabucco, Azucena in Il Trovatore at Tatar State Opera and Ballet Theatre in Kazan, Carmen at Kazan and Riga Opera Festival and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 during a concert tour of Mikhailovsky Theatre in Japan.

Yakov Strizhak Old Servant

Yakov Strizhak graduated from St. Petersburg State Conservatory in 2010. He was a soloist for St. Petersburg Opera, the Opera and Ballet Theatre of N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov and Jerusalem Chamber Opera Theatre as well as a choral soloist for Mariinsky Theatre. In 2014–15, he was a soloist at Komische Oper Berlin and is a soloist of Zazerkalie Opera Theatre in St. Petersburg. His repertoire includes King René in Iolanta; Prince Gremin in Eugene Onegin; Archbishop in The Maid of Orleans; Don Pasquale in Don Pasquale; Don Bartolo in Le nozze di Figaro; Don Alfonso in Così fan tutti; Don
Pavel Suliandziga

A graduate of the Russian Academy of Music in 2015, tenor Pavel Suliandziga is completing his professional studies at Mannes College of Music. His roles include Trike and Lensky in Eugene Onegin with the Russian Academy of Music; Tamino with RAM in collaboration with ESMUC in Barcelona, Spain; Peter Quint in Turn of the Screw; and Nemorino with Mannes. Suliandziga was also a solo performer in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with the RAM Orchestra. He was the first-place winner in 2013 and 2014 with AADGT in New York, performing in Carnegie Hall, and a prizewinner in the Bella Voce competition in Moscow. He was also a participant in the Vianden Festival in Luxembourg.
collaborator at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts.

**Lynn Krynicki** Stage Manager

Lynn Krynicki just finished her 18th consecutive season at Washington National Opera (WNO) at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. This summer she enjoys her 15th consecutive season as opera stage manager for Bard SummerScape. At WNO, her opera stage managing credits include _Die Walküre and Siegfried_ in WNO’s first _Der Ring des Nibelungen_ cycle, the world-premiere revision of Philip Glass’s _Appomattox, Dead Man Walking, Der fliegende Holländer, Madama Butterfly, Aida, _and _Candide_. Other notable stage management credits include the Latino Inaugural 2013 at the Kennedy Center; Taneyev’s _Oresteia _at Bard SummerScape; North American premiere of _The Picture of Dorian Gray _at Florentine Opera; _Carmen_, performed in Van Andel Arena for Opera Grand Rapids; and the world premiere of _Gabriel’s Daughter _at Central City Opera. She has also worked with Seattle Opera, Nashville Opera, Milwaukee Ballet, Chautauqua Opera, Pine Mountain Music Festival, Des Moines Metro Opera, and Madison Opera, among others.

**Jordan Fein** Assistant Director

Jordan Fein is a Brooklyn-based opera and theater director. His work has been produced and developed at numerous companies including Curtis Opera Theatre, Opera Philadelphia, Santa Fe Opera, Williamstown Theater Festival (2014 Boris Sagal Fellow), Ars Nova, The Bushwick Starr, Dixon Place, Here Arts Center, Baryshnikov Art Center, Joe’s Pub at The Public Theater, American Repertory Theater, Philly Fringe Arts, and Bard College. Select credits include _The Rape of Lucretia and Le nozze di Figaro (Curtis Opera Theatre); Dialogues of the Carmelites (Opera Philadelphia/Curtis); Singlet (The Bushwick Starr); The Skin of Our Teeth (Fisher Center at Bard College); A Ride on the Irish Cream (American Realness Festival); _and_ _The Dixon Family Album _(Williamstown Theater Festival). Upcoming fall 2018: The world premiere of the musical _Rags Parkland Sings the Songs of the Future _at Ars Nova.

**Candida Nichols** Associate Costume Designer

Candida Nichols’s work as a designer has taken her many places across the globe, working in theater, opera, dance, and with commercial clients. Credits include work seen at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), Lincoln Center Theater/Institute, Gotham Chamber Opera, Indianapolis Opera, NAACT, On Site Opera, Shakespeare Theater of New Jersey, Perseverance Theatre, Cohen New Works Festival, Tuacahn, and Prospect Theater. As resident artist with Theater Mitu, her work includes productions developed in the United Arab Emirates. Awards include the Hay Design Fellowship at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and a Roy Crane Award in the performing arts. She is a member of IATSE USA 829.

**Pesvebi Georgian Dancers**

Pesvebi is a dynamic dance ensemble based in Brooklyn, New York, dedicated to the showcasing and preservation of traditional Georgian dance, culture, and tradition. Pesvebi was founded by Shorena Barbakadze and Ivan Goderdzishvili, who emigrated from the Republic of Georgia to New York in 1998. After their son was born, they realized that children born in the United States of Georgian immigrant parents had a limited understanding of their heritage and lacked a community base. They established the Georgian Cultural Center in the United States and created the Pesvebi dance ensemble. Pesvebi quickly became popular, driven by hard work, creativity, dedication, and community support. Today Pesvebi has a large membership of talented dancers and musicians and a busy performance schedule including tours in the United States, Georgia, and Europe.

**American Symphony Orchestra**

Founded in 1962 by Leopold Stokowski, the American Symphony Orchestra (ASO) performs primarily at Carnegie Hall. Since 1992, its artistic director and principal conductor has been Leon Botstein. ASO has also performed in the renowned SummerScape and Bard Music Festival at the Richard B. Fisher Center, designed by Frank Gehry for Bard College. Consisting of New York City’s finest musicians, ASO regularly participates in numerous sponsored cultural and educational events. It has appeared in prestigious recordings, including Strauss’s opera _Die ägyptische Helena_ with Deborah Voigt (Telarc); music by Copland, Rands, Perle, and Sessions (New World); Dohnányi’s _Concertino for Harp and Orchestra _(Bridge); Strauss’s _Die Liebe der Danae _with Lauren Flangan (Telarc); _Franz Schubert: Orchestrated (Koch International)_ with works by Joachim, Mottl, and Webern; _Johannes Brahms’s Serenade No. 1 in D Major, Op. 11 for Orchestra _(Vanguard Classics); and Hindemith’s _The Long Christmas Dinner _(Bridge). Recordings of many of ASO’s live performances are available for download and purchase through major internet retailers such as iTunes and Amazon.
American Symphony Orchestra
Leon Botstein, Music Director

Violin I
Kobi Malkin, Concertmaster
Yukie Handa
Ragga Petursdottir
Ashley Horne
John Connelly
Heidi Stubner
Ming Yang
Gabrielle Fink
Bruno Peña
Mara Milkis

Violin II
Pauline Kim Harris, Principal
Wende Namkung
Yana Goichman
Alexander Vsetensky
Dorothy Strahl
Nagaz Tchakarian
Philip Payton
Dorothy Han

Viola
William Frampton, Principal
Sally Shumway
Shelley Holland-Moritz
Rachel Riggs
Adria Benjamin
Jen Herman

Cello
Eugene Moye, Principal
Sarah Carter
Annabelle Hoffman
Deborah Assael
Tatjana Margulis
Anik Oulianine

Bass
Jacqui Danilow, Principal
Jack Weng
Louis Bruno
Richard Sosinsky
Richard Messbauer

Oboe
Jeffrey Reinhardt, Principal
Erin Gustafson, English horn

Clarinet
Paul Won Jin Cho, Principal
Amalie Wyrick-Flax
Benjamin Baron, Bass clarinet

Piano
Elizabeth DiFelice, Principal

Harp
Victoria Drake, Principal

Organ
David Sytkowski

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Zachary Schwartzman

Music Librarian
Marc Cerri

Personnel Manager
Matthew Dine

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Bradley Ward, Principal
David Read
Jeffrey Caswell, Bass trombone

Timpani
Benjamin Herman, Principal

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David Nyberg, Principal
James Musto

Horn
Zohar Schondorf, Principal
David Smith
Kyle Hoyt
Steven Sherts
Sara Cyrus, Assistant

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