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**Anthony Freud**  
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**Enrique Mazzola**  
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# Verdi Voices

**Sunday, February 6, 2022, 2 p.m.**

Tamara Wilson, *soprano*

Russell Thomas, *tenor*

Enrique Mazzola, *conductor*

Members of the Lyric Opera Orchestra

**Verdi Voices** is generously presented by  
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The Enrique Circle is comprised of Lyric's most dedicated  
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Enrique Mazzola's exciting artistic vision and legacy.

**APPROXIMATE TIMINGS**

2 hours, 5 minutes  
With a 25 minute Intermission

# Program

## Verdi Voices

Tamara Wilson, *soprano*

Russell Thomas, *tenor*

Enrique Mazzola, *conductor*

Members of the Lyric Opera Orchestra

Giuseppe Verdi  
(1813 | 1901)

*La forza del destino*, Overture

*Nabucco*

"Ben io t'invenni ... Anch'io dischiuso ... Salgo già del trono aurato"

TAMARA WILSON

*Ernani*

"Mercè, diletti amici ... Come rugiada al cespite ... O tu che l'alma adora"

RUSSELL THOMAS

*Ernani*

"Surta è la notte ... Ernani, involami ... Tutto sprezzo che d'Ernani"

TAMARA WILSON

*Simon Boccanegra*

"O inferno ... Sento avvampar nell'anima"

RUSSELL THOMAS

*Otello*

"Già nella notte densa"

TAMARA WILSON  
RUSSELL THOMAS

## INTERMISSION

*Aida*

"Pur ti riveggo ... Là tra foreste vergini"

TAMARA WILSON  
RUSSELL THOMAS

*La traviata*, Act 1 prelude

*La Forza del destino*

"La vita è inferno al infelice ... O tu che in seno agli angeli"

RUSSELL THOMAS

*Don Carlos*

"Toi qui sus les néant"

TAMARA WILSON

*Un ballo in maschera*, Act 1 prelude

*Un ballo in maschera*, Act 2

"Teco io sto"

TAMARA WILSON  
RUSSELL THOMAS

Lighting Designer: **Bridget Williams**

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Assistant Stage Manager: **Peggy Stenger**

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Projected English Titles Translations: **Roger Pines, Francis Rizzo**

Cover Photo: **Joe Mazza**

*Don Carlos*, "Toi qui sus les néant" – By arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., Agent for Ricordi, publisher and copyright owner

*Lyric*

# From the music director

**It is of the greatest importance to me** to find the true essence of whatever work I am conducting. Whether it's a contemporary work, a Baroque opera, or even the smallest Donizetti comedy, I always strive to find its truth and beauty. I approach every work on its own merits and have avoided choosing one over another. But there is no doubt that Verdi is one of the supreme operatic geniuses.

I am delighted to welcome you to *Verdi Voices*. In this concert we will explore works written throughout Verdi's career. Over six decades, Verdi always remained contemporary and relevant. As we will hear, moving from *Ernani* to *Otello*, he mastered many different styles, from *bel canto* to the pinnacle of Italian Romantic opera. Our repertoire demonstrates that, above all, Verdi was always true to himself, and that there was a clear evolution from one work to the next. If you open any Verdi score at any page, his individual musical voice is instantly recognizable.

It has been an enormously enjoyable challenge to select our repertoire from Verdi's vast output for soprano and tenor. Fortunately we have with us two formidable artists, Tamara Wilson and Russell Thomas—American singers who are immersed in an Italian way of thinking about the music. I love how they have entered into the realm of *Italianità*. It's not just about singing. This is the world you must inhabit to perform Verdi with the mix of clarity and warmth that his music requires. I am thrilled that our program also gives our brilliant Lyric Opera Orchestra many opportunities to shine.

Combined with your presence here, all the elements are in place for a program of dazzling fireworks the composer himself would have loved.



**ENRIQUE MAZZOLA**

*Music Director*

# Artist profiles



## TAMARA WILSON | SOPRANO

**Previously at Lyric:** *Leonora/Il trovatore* (2018/19).

Winner of the prestigious Richard Tucker Award and Grand Prize in the annual

Francisco Viñas Competition, the Arizona-born dramatic soprano, who grew up in the Chicago area, has rapidly gained international recognition, particularly as the heroines of Verdi and Strauss. Recent highlights include her debut at Teatro La Fenice for *Fidelio*, and performances with the Bayerische Staatsoper for *Ariadne auf Naxos*. She will appear in LA Opera for *St. Matthew Passion*, Houston Grand Opera for *Turandot*, and The Cleveland Orchestra for *Otello*. She has previously triumphed in *Il trovatore* in Barcelona, Houston, Toulouse, and Mallorca. Other Verdi operas in her repertoire are *I due Foscari* (Toulouse, Santiago, Amsterdam), *La forza del destino* (London—Olivier Award nomination), *Don Carlos* (Houston, Munich, Zurich, Frankfurt), and *Un ballo in maschera* (Berlin, Washington). In the 2018/19 season, she returned to the Metropolitan Opera (*Aida*) and the Zurich Opera House (Chrysothemis/*Elektra*), and made her mainstage debut at La Scala (the Prima Donna and *Ariadne/Ariadne auf Naxos*, after appearing with the company in the Verdi *Requiem* in Pavia, Paris, and Hamburg). Her versatility extends to *Don Giovanni* (Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra), *Norma* (Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu), *Die Walküre* (BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra), and *Die Fledermaus* (in Japan under Ozawa). In demand for concert works, Wilson has made acclaimed appearances with the major orchestras of New York, Washington, Cleveland, Chicago, London, and Amsterdam, among many others. She appears on CD with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in Verdi's *Requiem* and in the Frankfurt production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.



## RUSSELL THOMAS | TENOR

**Previously at Lyric:** *Manrico/Il trovatore* (2018/19), *Pollione/Norma* (2016/17).

The internationally celebrated American tenor starred earlier this season as Florestan in *Fidelio* for the San Francisco Opera. He will be featured at Lyric as Mario Cavaradossi in the forthcoming *Tosca* (2021/22), and later this season he returns to the title role/*Otello* (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, after successes at the Washington National Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and the Atlanta Symphony). Thomas's 2020/21 season included

his return to Don Alvaro/*La forza del destino* (Deutsche Oper Berlin), a concert of the title-role in *Oedipus Rex* with LA Opera and Cavaradossi in *Tosca* with Cincinnati Opera. He recently starred in *Aida* (Houston Grand Opera), *Il trovatore* (Bayerische Staatsoper), *Idomeneo* (Salzburg Festival, new Peter Sellars production), *Roberto Devereux* (San Francisco Opera), and *La clemenza di Tito* (LA Opera). Thomas has previously enjoyed great successes as Beethoven's Florestan (Cincinnati); Bellini's Pollione (San Francisco, Los Angeles, Toronto, Valencia); Verdi's Stiffelio (Frankfurt), Don Carlo (Washington, Berlin), and Gabriele Adorno (London); and Puccini's Rodolfo (Met). He has been featured with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony, Dallas Symphony, New York Philharmonic and Los Angeles Philharmonic.



## ENRIQUE MAZZOLA | CONDUCTOR

Lyric's Music Director—only the third in the company's history—is renowned as an expert interpreter and champion of *bel canto* opera and a specialist in French repertoire and early Verdi. Lyric audiences first experienced the Italian conductor's artistry in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* in 2016/17, and subsequently in Bellini's *I puritani* in 2017/18. During Lyric's 2019/20 season he led Verdi's *Luisa Miller* to launch the company's Early Verdi Series. Mazzola's first opera as Lyric's music director, Sir David McVicar's new production of Verdi's *Macbeth*, opened the 2021/22 season, followed by Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*. Mazzola is Principal Guest Conductor at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and served as Artistic and Music Director of the Orchestre National d'Île de France from 2012 to 2019. Symphonic guest work has included the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Philharmonia Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, London Philharmonic, and Brussels Philharmonic. He has conducted *bel canto* works for The Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, and the major houses of Florence, Strasbourg, Berlin, Zurich, Moscow, and Tokyo, in addition to a historic Meyerbeer cycle for Deutsche Oper Berlin. Past major European festivals have included Glyndebourne (including DVD releases of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *Poliuto*), new productions in 2019 for Bregenz (*Rigoletto*) and Salzburg (*Orphée aux Enfers*), Pesaro (Rossini Opera Festival), Venice, and Aix-en-Provence. Mazzola was born in Barcelona, Spain, into a musical family, and grew up in Milan, where he studied violin and piano, earning diplomas in composition and orchestral conducting at the Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi of Milan. **Enrique Mazzola is the John D. and Alexandra C. Nichols Endowed Chair.** 

# Program notes

By Roger Pines

## ***La forza del destino, Overture***

The score of *La forza del destino* (1862) is decidedly grand-scale, befitting a plot that unfolds across a vast panorama in mid-18th-century Spain and Italy. This work's majesty is evident in the overture, long a favorite in concert programs. Along with unique vigor and power, it emphasizes two themes associated with the heroine, Leonora: her soaring plea to the Almighty for pity; and a more buoyant melody, sung after Padre Guardiano, father superior of the Hornachuelos monastery, informs the desperate Leonora that he can provide her with a refuge from the world.

## ***Nabucco, "Ben io l'invenni ... Anch'io dischiuso un giorno ... Salgo già del trono aurato"***

After the mixed reception of his first opera, *Oberto* (1839), and the fiasco of his second, *Un giorno di regno* (1840), Verdi could easily have given up his quest for success in the opera house (particularly after the deaths of his wife and two infant children within fourteen months). Fortunately, his third opera, *Nabucco* (1842), scored a triumph, paving the way for the stupendous career that lay ahead.

Abigail has been raised as the daughter of Nabucco (Nebuchadnezzar), king of Babylon. While he's away fighting the Israelites, she discovers certain proof that she was actually born a slave. She rages about this in her recitative, but then moves into an exquisite cavatina, in which she longs for the love of Ismaele, nephew of the king of Jerusalem. Consumed by her desire for power, she then declares—in a wide-ranging, thrillingly florid cabaletta—that she will seize the throne from Nabucco.

## ***Ernani, "Mercè, diletti amici ... Come rugiada al cespite ... O tu che l'alma"; "Surta è la notte ... Ernani, involami ... Tutto sprezzo che d'Ernani"***

Based on a drama by Victor Hugo, *Ernani* (1844) offers larger-than-life personalities, brought to life in glorious music. The opera is firmly rooted in the *bel canto* tradition, while at the same time boasting a rhythmic energy that was Verdi's alone.

The title character is a nobleman, deprived of his lands and now forced to live as a bandit. He begins the opera with an elegant cavatina, in which he thinks ardently of his beloved Elvira. In an exhilarating cabaletta, he asks his cohorts to assist him in abducting her.

Verdi gave his soprano an exceptionally rewarding entrance scene. Elvira first sings an elaborate cavatina, in which she hopes that Ernani will free her from the embraces of Silva, her uncle, who's soon to marry her. When Silva's wedding presents are offered to her, she ignores them and, in sparkling song, declares that she loves only Ernani.

## ***Simon Boccanegra, "O inferno ... Sento avvampar nell'anima"***

When *Simon Boccanegra* premiered in Venice in 1857, it was essentially still a work in progress. Verdi gave himself nearly a quarter-century to consider what could be done to improve the opera. His work with a new collaborator, librettist Arrigo Boito (a notable composer himself), transformed *Boccanegra*, which triumphed in its revised version at Milan's La Scala in 1881.

Simon Boccanegra, the Doge of Genoa, has an enemy in the hotheaded aristocrat Gabriele Adorno. Gabriele, in love with Amelia Grimaldi, is unaware that she's Boccanegra's long-lost daughter. When Paolo Albani, the Doge's favored courtier, hints to Gabriele that Amelia is Boccanegra's mistress, Verdi gives Gabriele a superb monologue that initially blazes with fury. In its second half, he sadly laments that if Amelia's virtue has been defiled, he can never see her again.

## ***Otello, "Già nella notte densa"***

Verdi's lifelong devotion to Shakespeare led him to the Bard's *Othello*, which he adapted for a work that received an ecstatic response in its 1887 Milan premiere. One of opera's greatest adaptations from spoken theater, *Otello* is a miracle of musical and dramatic economy, while combining intimacy and grandeur in equal proportions.

Otello, governor of Cyprus, has promoted the officer Cassio over the ensign Iago. In a drunken brawl instigated by the jealous Iago, Cassio wounds Montano, the former governor. After Otello restores calm, demotes Cassio, and sends the Cypriot townspeople on their way, he enjoys a moment alone with his wife, Desdemona. They tenderly recall their courtship and kiss under the stars.

## ***Aida, "Pur ti riveggo ... Là tra foreste vergini"***

For all its immense musical and theatrical scale, *Aida* (1871) is at the same time a work of surprising intimacy, with frequently only two or three people onstage. They communicate with an intensity that can rivet the listener in this romantic tragedy set in ancient Egypt.

Princess Amneris is soon to marry Radamès, captain of the guard, but he loves Amneris's slave, Aida. On the banks of the Nile, when Aida meets secretly with Radamès, she's furious with him until he persuades her that he loves her alone. She then suggests that they could escape Egypt and enjoy a blissful new life "in the virgin forests, fragrant with sweet flowers."



Russell Thomas sings the role of Manrico in Lyric Opera of Chicago's *Il trovatore* in 2018.

#### ***La traviata*, Act 1 prelude**

Initially a failure, *La traviata* (1853) soon took off in popularity, and will no doubt keep its place in the standard repertoire forever as the epitome of romantic opera. Verdi sets the stage memorably in the opening prelude, highlighted by the deeply soulful melody sung by the heroine, Violetta, in Act 2, when she begs her lover, "Love me, Alfredo—love me as much as I love you!"

#### ***La forza del destino*, "La vita è inferno al infelice ... O tu che in seno agli angeli"**

In a tragic accident, Alvaro fatally shoots Leonora's father. They flee Seville together, but are eventually separated. Alvaro becomes an officer in the army, but in his fervent, deeply moving monologue, he sadly laments his situation, and—assuming Leonora to be dead—begs her to look down from heaven and pity him.

#### ***Don Carlos*, "Toi qui sus les néant"**

Like many other Verdi operas, *Don Carlos* (1867) memorably illuminates the private emotions of very public personalities. Loosely based on Schiller's play of the same name, the opera presents Spain's King Philip II, his young wife Élisabeth (whom he has married for political reasons), and his son Carlos (who secretly loves Élisabeth), each a desperately conflicted figure. Every episode probes deeply into these characters' psychology, with Verdi working at a peak of musical and dramaturgical maturity.

The opera's unforgettably moving final aria is sung by Élisabeth, who has come to the cloister of St. Just for a last meeting with Carlos. She knows that he must leave Spain and serve the oppressed people of Flanders, and that when he departs, she will have nothing left to live for. Élisabeth calls on the spirit of Philip's father, King Carlos V, asking him to carry her tears to God.



Tamara Wilson performs in Lyric's original filmed production of *Attila Highlights in Concert*.

#### ***Un ballo in maschera*, Act 1 prelude; "Teco io sto"**

Captivatingly tuneful, *Un ballo in maschera* (1859) is also an intriguing mix of romance and political plotting. Its greatest strength is the protagonist, King Gustav III of Sweden, the most thoroughly appealing of all Verdi's tenor heroes. The work's brief prelude presents the lyrical theme of Gustav's lovesick opening aria (along with the motive of the conspirators who plot to assassinate him).

The love duet in which Gustav joins the heroine, Amelia, provides ten minutes of passionately expressive music giving both singers ample opportunity for vocal glory.

Gustav secretly loves Amelia, wife of his secretary, Renato. Amelia visits the fortune teller, Ulrica, desperate to find some way to forget her forbidden feelings for Gustav. (She doesn't realize that he's eavesdropping on their conversation!). Ulrica advises her to find a particular magic herb. When searching for it at night in a desolate spot outside the city, Amelia is stunned when Gustav appears. He gradually breaks down her defenses and she finally confesses her love.

*Roger Pines, former dramaturg of Lyric Opera of Chicago, writes regularly for major international opera-related publications and has been a panelist on the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts' Opera Quiz since 2006. He currently teaches an opera repertoire course at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music.* [L](#)



# Orchestra

## MUSIC STAFF

Elizabeth Askren  
William C. Billingham  
Susan Miller Hult  
Noah Lindquist  
Francesco Milioto  
Jerad Mosbey  
Matthew Piatt  
Chris Reynolds  
Stefano Sarzani  
Eric Weimer

## ORCHESTRA

### Violin I

Robert Hanford, *Concertmaster*  
Heather Wittels, *Acting Assistant Concertmaster*  
Alexander Belavsky  
Kathleen Brauer  
Bing Jing Yu  
Laura Miller  
Liba Shacht

### Violin II

Yin Shen, *Principal*  
John Macfarlane, *Assistant Principal*  
Diane Duraffourg-Robinson  
Ann Palen  
Irene Radetzky\*  
John D. Robinson  
David Volfe  
Albert Wang

### Viola

Carol Cook, *Principal*  
Terri Van Valkinburgh, *Assistant Principal*  
Frank W. Babbitt  
Patrick Brennan  
Amy Hess  
Melissa Trier Kirk

### Cello

Calum Cook, *Principal*  
Paul Dwyer\*, *Assistant Principal*  
Mark Brandfonbrener, *Acting Assistant Principal*  
William H. Cernota  
Walter Preucil

### String Bass

Ian Hallas, *Principal*  
Samuel Shuhan,  
*Assistant Principal*  
Andrew L. W. Anderson\*  
Gregory Bryan Sarchet  
Collins R. Trier

### \*On leave, 2021/2022 Season

The Lyric Opera Orchestra string sections utilize revolving seating. Players behind the front desk change seats systematically and are listed alphabetically in the roster above.

## Flute

Marie Tachouet, *Principal*  
Dionne Jackson, *Assistant Principal*  
Alyce Johnson

## Piccolo

Alyce Johnson

## Oboe

Judith Kulb, *Principal*  
Judith Zunamon Lewis,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

## English Horn

Judith Zunamon Lewis

## Clarinet

Linda A. Baker,  
*Acting Co-Principal,*  
*Co-Assistant Principal*  
Susan Warner,  
*Acting Co-Principal,*  
*Co-Assistant Principal*

## Bass Clarinet

Linda A. Baker

## Bassoon

Preman Tilson, *Principal*  
Lewis Kirk, *Assistant Principal*

## Contrabassoon

Lewis Kirk

## Horn

Jonathan Boen, *Principal*  
Fritz Foss, *Assistant Principal/ Utility*  
Robert E. Johnson, *Third Horn*  
Samuel Hamzem  
Neil Kimel

## Trumpet

William Denton, *Principal*  
Rebecca Oliverio,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

## Trombone

Jeremy Moeller, *Principal*  
Mark Fisher, *Assistant Principal*

## Tuba

Andrew Smith, *Principal*

## Timpani

Edward Harrison, *Principal*

## Percussion

Douglas Waddell,  
*Acting Principal*  
Eric Millstein,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

## Harp

Lynn Williams\*, *Principal*

## Librarian

John Rosenkrans, *Principal*

## Personnel Manager

Christine Janicki

## Stage Band Contractor

Christine Janicki

## EXTRA MUSICIANS

Eleanor Bartsch, *violin*  
Jennifer Cappelli, *violin*  
Ying Chai, *violin*  
Renee Gauthier, *violin*  
Sheila Hanford, *violin*  
Kiju Joh, *violin*  
Karyn Macfarlane, *violin*  
Aurelien Pederzoli, *viola*  
Teddy Gabrielides, *bass*  
Amy Barwan, *oboe*  
JJ Koh, *clarinet*  
Mark Fry, *bass trombone*  
Matt Gaunt, *tuba/cimbasso*  
Lauren Hayes, *harp*

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PUCCINI

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