

Italians at the Metropolitan Opera

Gina Di Meo (October 08, 2007)



You can't say they are an army but they are close. I am talking about the Italians at the Metropolitan Opera, those both onstage and backstage of one of the most famous theaters in the world. Counting singers, conductors, assistants, musicians, producers, and designers, they are nearly 50, without considering those who in some ways have Italian origins.

Male artists seem to dominate, while female artists are only one soprano and a mezzo-soprano. But among the tenors, baritones and basses are some of the best, like Salvatore Licitra, labeled Pavarotti's heir who this year was sang in three productions; Pagliacci/Cavalleria Rusticana, Il Trittico and Un ballo in maschera. We are also honored that an Italian has opened the new 2007-2008 Italian

opera season. On September 24th the spotlights were on Marcello Giordani who sang as Edgardo in Gaetano Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor. Actually, our tenor was not new to this kind of popularity because he opened last year's opera season as well, in Puccini's "Madame Butterfly." Peter Gelb, the Metropolitan Opera's general manager calls him "the tenor of the Met" and we are very proud that our countrymen are very famous outside of Italy especially in a moment when opera in Italy is suffering. The opening night performance was also transmitted live in Times Square and at Lincoln Center's Josie Robertson Plaza. Italian operas also have the most consideration at the Met; 13 out of 30 recitals for ongoing season "speak" Italian. On top we find Giuseppe Verdi with Aida, Un ballo in maschera, Ernani, Macbeth, Othello, and La Traviata, followed by Giacomo Puccini's La Bohème, Madame Butterfly, Manon Lescaut, and then Gaetano Donizetti's La fille du régiment, Lucia di Lammermoor, and last but not least, Gioachino Rossini's infamous Barber of Seville, and Vincenzo Bellini's Norma. Furthermore, the production of La Traviata, Carmen, La Bohème, has the signature of one of the most famous Italian directors in the world, Franco Zeffirelli. We close our praise to the Italians at the Met with a list of their names. **Soprano:** Micaela Carosi, **mezzo-soprano:** Luciana D'Intino, **tenors:** Franco Farina, Giuseppe Filianoti, Marcello Giordani, Salvatore Licitra, **baritones:** Alessandro Corbelli, Marco Di Felice, Lucio Gallo, Ruggero Raimondi, Luca Salsi, Franco Vassallo, **bass-baritones:** Maurizio Muraro, **basses:** Carlo Colombara, Ferruccio Furlanetto, Michele Pertusi, **conductors:** Roberto Abbado, Dante Anzolini, Marco Armiliato, Maurizio Benini, Fabio Luisi, Nicola Luisotti, Carlo Rizzi, **assistant conductors:** Speranza Scappucci, **producers:** Piero Faggoni, Giancarlo Menotti, Pier Luigi Samaritani, Franco Zeffirelli, **designers:** Anna Anni, Piero Faggoni, Raimonda Gaetani, Gianni Quaranta, Dada Saligeri, Pier Luigi Samaritani, Franco Zeffirelli, **Lindemann Young Artist Development Program:** Renata Scotto, Diana Soviero, Benita Valente. **Orchestra:** Elena Barere (violin), **chorus:** Maria Donaldi (alto), Salvatore Rosselli (tenor), Alessandro Magno (extra choristers), choreographer: Laura Scozzi.

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