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***For Immediate Release***

**THE OPERA ORCHESTRA OF NEW YORK TO PRESENT DONIZETTI'S *PARISINA D'ESTE*  
ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2016 AT JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER'S ROSE THEATER  
STARRING SOPRANO ANGELA MEADE**

*New York, NY (March 11, 2016)* – The Opera Orchestra of New York will present an opera-in-concert performance of Gaetano Donizetti's *Parisina D'este* conducted by the company's Founder & Music Director Laureate Eve Queler on Wednesday, May 4, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall, Broadway at 60th Street, New York City. Soprano **Angela Meade**, one of today's foremost exponents of the Bel Canto repertoire, will star in the title role. ***Parisina D'Este*** also features a cast of young artists including American tenor **Aaron Blake** in the role of Ugo, Chinese Baritone **Yunpeng Wang** in the role of Duke Azzo, Serbian bass **Sava Vemić** in the role of Ernesto, and American Soprano **Mia Pafumi** in the role of Imelda.

Single tickets priced from \$35 - \$165 and go on sale on Monday, March 28 and can be purchased at the the Box Office at Jazz at Lincoln Center, by phone via CenterCharge at 212-721-6500, or online through the Jazz at Lincoln Center website at [www.jazz.org](http://www.jazz.org).

***Parisina d'Este*** is an opera (*tragedia lirica*), in three acts by Gaetano Donizetti. Felice Romani wrote the Italian libretto after Byron's 1816 poem *Parisina*. The characters of Parisina and Duke Azzo in both Byron's poem and Donizetti's opera are very loosely based on the historical figures of Parisina Malatesta (the daughter of Andrea Malatesta) and Niccolò III d'Este. *Parisina* premiered on March 17, 1833 at the Teatro della Pergola in Florence. The opera received its American premiere at the St. Charles Theatre in New Orleans on June 4, 1837 and was the first opera by Donizetti to be performed in the United States. ***Parisina d'Este*** was presented by OONY in 1974 and starred Montserrat Caballé (*Parisina*), Jerome Pruet (Ugo), Louis Quilico (Azzo), James Morris (Ernesto), and conducted by Eve Queler. The Donizetti Society of England stated that in this performance "Caballé revealed her mastery in portraying one of Donizetti's tragic heroines. The conductor Eve Queler commendably restored the work to accord with composer's autograph at Bergamo".

**The Opera Orchestra of New York** was established by Eve Queler in 1971 to present rarely-heard operas and provide the public with an opportunity to hear them performed in major concert venues. Among Opera Orchestra's numerous U.S. premieres are Puccini's *Edgar* with Carlo Bergonzi and Renata Scottò; Boito's *Nerone* with James Morris and Pablo Elvira; and Smetana's *Libuse* with Gabriela Benacková and Paul Plishka. The company also performed the New York premiere of Tchaikovsky's *The Maid of Orleans*, with Dolora Zajick and Jorma Hynninen, which was also the American premiere of the Russian language version. The ensemble has also presented works long neglected in New York, such as Wagner's *Rienzi*, Verdi's *I Lombardi*, Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles*, and Catalani's *La Wally*. Those pioneering efforts have led national opera companies such as the Metropolitan

Opera, Chicago Lyric and Houston Grand Opera to add to their permanent repertoires works that received their first major modern hearing by The Opera Orchestra of New York, including *I Lombardi*, Donizetti's *La Favorita*, Zandonai's *Francesca da Rimini*, Dvořák's *Rusalka* and Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina*.

Since 1978 Opera Orchestra's Young Artists Program has identified and fostered young operatic talent. The program has nurtured the talents of Renée Fleming, Aprile Millo, Vivica Genaux, Deborah Voigt, Latonia Moore, Stephen Costello, Michael Fabiano, Bryan Hymel and Eglise Gutiérrez. Other singers who have worked with Opera Orchestra very early in their careers include José Carreras, Barbara Hendricks, Dwayne Croft, Samuel Ramey and James Morris. Singers who made their U.S. or New York debuts with Opera Orchestra include Gabriela Benacková, Stephanie Blythe, Olga Borodina, Ghena Dimitrova, Jane Eaglen, Carlo Guelfi, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Vesselina Kasarova, Paul Plishka, Rosalind Plowright and Krassimira Stoyanova and Dolora Zajick.

### **EVE QUELER**

**Eve Queler** is internationally recognized for her ground-breaking work with the Opera Orchestra and as a guest conductor of symphonic and opera repertoire at venues that span the international musical world. She has conducted more than 100 operas in concert at Carnegie Hall, many of which are rarely performed, bringing them to the attention of the American public and introducing them to the standard repertoire. Ms. Queler has championed many Russian and Czech operas unknown in the U.S. and was the first conductor in America to perform Mussorgsky's unfinished *Khovanshchina* with orchestration by Shostakovich, as well as the first Czech-language performance of Janacek's *Katya Kabanova* in 1979, *Jenufa* in 1988 and Dvorak's *Rusalka* in 1987.

In September 2009 Ms. Queler conducted the opening of the Bellini Festival at the Teatro Massimo Bellini in Catania and in July 2010 made her debut at the Puccini Festival, Torre del Lago conducting a new production of *Madama Butterfly*. Awards include *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, one of the highest awards presented by the French government, for her commitment to French operas; the Sanford Medal, Yale University's highest musical honor; an honor by Opera Index and the National Endowment Lifetime Achievement Award in Opera for her dedication to emerging singers.

### **ANGELA MEADE**

Hailed as "the most talked about soprano of her generation" (*Opera News*), American soprano Angela Meade is the winner of both the Metropolitan Opera's 2012 Beverly Sills Artist Award and the 2011 Richard Tucker Award. In 2008 she joined an elite group of history's singers when, as Elvira in Verdi's *Ernani*, she made her professional operatic debut on the Met stage. Since then she has fast become recognized as one of today's outstanding vocalists, excelling in the most demanding heroines of the 19th-century *bel canto* repertoire as well as in the operas of Verdi and Mozart. As the *New Yorker* put it, "Meade is astounding. ... She has exceptional dynamic control, able to move from floating pianissimos to sudden dramatic swells. The coloratura effects – rapid runs, trills, delicate turns, and so on – are handled with uncommon ease. She is a very musical singer, naturally and intelligently riding the phrase." In the 2015-16 season, Meade sings Leonora in Verdi's *Il trovatore* on both sides of the Atlantic, at the Met, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and the Palacio de la Opera in Spain's A Coruña, where she also looks forward to giving a solo recital. She revisits her celebrated portrayal of Bellini's Norma at Los Angeles Opera and performs selections from *Don Giovanni* with the Baltimore Symphony. In concert, she returns to the Philadelphia Orchestra for a New Year's Eve Gala and performances of Mahler's Eighth under Yannick Nézet-

Séguin, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the symphony's U.S. premiere, as well as to her alma mater, Pacific Lutheran University, for a Christmas concert that will be broadcast on PBS. Besides making her Cincinnati Symphony debut under Giancarlo Guerrero in her first performances of Rachmaninoff's *The Bells*, and her St. Louis Symphony debut in Beethoven's Ninth, she sings Verdi's Requiem on three continents: with the Boston Philharmonic, Brazil's Fundação Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo, and with Spain's Asociación Bilbaína de Amigos de la Ópera (ABAO Bilbao). Last season saw Meade – the face of the *Opera News* 2014 "Diva Issue" – reprise Verdi's Elvira at the Met, this time singing opposite Plácido Domingo under the leadership of James Levine. She undertook the title role of Rossini's *Ermione* at Palacio de la Opera, and, as one of the few sopranos to feature all three of Donizetti's Tudor queens in her repertoire, headlined *Maria Stuarda* in concert at Oregon's Astoria Music Festival. Again in Donizetti, she joined Sir Mark Elder and the Hallé Orchestra to record the composer's lesser-known opera *Le duc d'Albe* for future release by Opera Rara. In concert, Verdi's Requiem was the vehicle for debuts with the New York Philharmonic, under Alan Gilbert; at London's BBC Proms, with Donald Runnicles leading the BBC Scottish Symphony; and with Spain's Oviedo Filarmonía. She also joined the Philadelphia Orchestra for Mahler's Second in Philadelphia and at Carnegie Hall; sang Beethoven's Ninth with the BBC Scottish Symphony; and headlined concert performances of Rossini's *Guglielmo Tell* with the orchestra of the Teatro Regio di Torino and Gianandrea Noseda in Edinburgh, Italy, and on a high-profile North American tour. Since her momentous Met debut, Meade's numerous returns to the storied New York house include starring in the title roles of *Norma* and Sir David McVicar's new *Anna Bolena*; as Leonora in *Il trovatore*; as Alice Ford in a new *Falstaff* under James Levine, as seen around the world in the Met's Live in HD series and just released on DVD by Decca Classics; and as Mozart's Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*. She also reprised Verdi's Elvira in a production seen both in the Met's Live in HD series and as a Great Performances at the Met presentation on PBS-TV. At Carnegie Hall, she headlined Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* and appeared in Rossini's *Moïse et Pharaon*, while at Lincoln Center she sang Giselda in Verdi's *I Lombardi* with the Opera Orchestra of New York.

Other highlights of recent seasons include debuts at the Vienna State Opera as Elena in Verdi's *I vespri siciliani*; Deutsche Oper Berlin and Oper Frankfurt, in concert performances of Verdi's *I due Foscari* and Puccini's *Edgar*, respectively; Italy's Teatro Regio di Torino as Mathilde in a new production of *Guglielmo Tell*; Los Angeles Opera and Cincinnati Opera as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*; and, in her first fully-staged title portrayal of *Norma*, at Washington National Opera, where she was subsequently honored as "2013 Artist of the Year." She was catapulted to prominence in a 2010 concert performance of *Norma* at the Caramoor International Music Festival, where she has also triumphed as Héléne in Verdi's *Les vêpres siciliennes*, and in the title roles of Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* and Rossini's *Semiramide*. In 2010, Meade made her European operatic debut at Ireland's Wexford Festival in the title role of Mercadante's rarely staged *Virginia*. On the concert stage, Meade has appeared in recital at the Kennedy Center, and as soloist with the New York Philharmonic, Baltimore Symphony, Boston Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Houston Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain, Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, San Antonio Symphony, and Seattle Symphony, among others. Conductors with whom she has collaborated include Roberto Abbado, Marin Alsop, Marco Armiliato, Thomas Dausgaard, Charles Dutoit, Riccardo Frizza, Manfred Honeck, Sebastian Lang-Lessing, James Levine, Fabio Luisi, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Donald Runnicles, Gerard Schwarz, and Osmo Vänskä. A native of Washington State and an alumna of the Academy of Vocal Arts, Angela Meade has triumphed in an astounding number of vocal competitions: 57 in all, including many of the opera world's most important prizes. In addition to being a winner at the 2007 Met National Council Auditions, as documented in *The*

*Audition*, a film that was subsequently released on DVD by Decca, she was the first singer to take first prize in both the opera and operetta categories of Vienna's prestigious Belvedere Competition.

## **AARON BLAKE**

American tenor **Aaron Blake**, touted as "A vocal powerhouse" by the Los Angeles Times, for his portrayal of Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* is becoming known as a vibrant interpreter of many of the composer's roles. In 2014/15 Mr. Blake returns to Carnegie Hall to appear as Uriel in Haydn's *Creation* with the Oratorio Society of New York. He then makes his debut as with the Lexington Philharmonic as the tenor soloist in the *Messiah*. Returning to both The Dallas Opera, and The Utah Opera, he will be involved with the world premiere of *Everest* by Jolby Talbot as well as make his role debut as Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, respectively.

The 2013/2014 began with an exciting debut as Don Ottavio in The Cincinnati Opera's production of *Don Giovanni*, opposite soprano Angela Meade. In addition he made company debuts with Virginia Opera as Fenton in *Falstaff*, Opera Grand Rapids as Pedrillo in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, as Tamino in Minnesota Opera's *The Magic Flute*, and a return to Cincinnati Opera in their productions of *Carmen* and Cavalli's *La Calisto* as Pane. In concert Mr. Blake was heard in Carnegie Hall for a performance of Mendelssohn's *Die Erste Walpurgisnacht* and the Mozart Requiem with the Oratorio Society of New York, a piece hereperised with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. Recent seasons have found the tenor making debuts with several companies including Opera Birmingham as Tamino, The Washington National Opera in Stephen Lawless' production of *Anna Bolena* opposite Sandra Radvanovsky, and as Idamante in Opera San Jose's production of *Idomeneo*. In 2011 he made his Carnegie Hall debut with the Oratorio Society of New York's performances of *The Messiah* (Mozart version). He has had the opportunity to work with several notable conductors and directors for many of his productions including Maestros Graeme Jenkins, Frederic Chaslin, James Conlon, Eve Queler, Alan Gilbert, Richard Bado, Patrick Summers, Marco Zambelli, David Zinman, Marco Guidarini, Larry Rachleff, Corrado Rovaris and Bramwell Tovey, among others. Recently, he covered Don Ottavio in the Los Angeles Philharmonic's production of *Don Giovanni* under the baton of Mo. Dudamel. Mr. Blake has also worked with many engaging directors that have included Laurent Pelly, Bliss Hebert, Christian Rath, Bartlett Sher, Garnett Bruce and Christopher Alden to name a few. Aaron Blake was awarded the Bagby Foundation Career Grant in January 2011; a grant designed to support the careers promising emerging artists at the precipice of a major careers in the performing arts. In addition, he has been a First Prize winner of the Florida Grand Opera Competition and the Concerto Competition at the Aspen Music Festival. He has also been a prize winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions. In 2011 he did Brian in the 2nd workshop production of Nico Muhly's opera *Two Boys* at the Met. In addition, he sang concerts of Rodgers and Hammerstein with The Artist Series of Sarasota, and made his debut with The Dallas Opera as Hervey in *Anna Bolena*, with performances that followed of both Tybalt and Romeo in their production of *Romeo et Juliette*. 2009 marked Mr. Blake's concert debut in a Gala Concert for the Shepherd School of Music opposite star soprano Renée Fleming. That season he was also an apprentice with the Santa Fe Opera singing the role of Evandre in Gluck's *Alceste* and covering Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*. He then joined the Utah Opera and Symphony as a resident artist making his debut with the company as El Remendado in *Carmen* followed by performances of *Messiah* conducted by Suzanne Sheston, and as both Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* and Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*. He is also an alumnus of The Music Academy of the West, The Juilliard School and The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University..

## **YUNPENG WANG**

Featured on the cover of the October 2015 issue of Opera News as one of “opera’s exciting new voices,” highly acclaimed Chinese baritone Yunpeng Wang is quickly gaining international recognition on both opera and concert stages of the world. In the 2015-2016 season Mr. Wang returns to the Metropolitan Opera for his third year as a member of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program with appearances including Fiorello in Bartlett Sher’s production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, conducted by Antony Walker, and Prince Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly*, which will be broadcast on the Live in HD series to movie theaters around the world. He also returns to the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, Italy to make his role debut as Figaro in a concert version of Rossini’s *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* under the baton of Alberto Zedda, as well as singing Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with the Macao Symphony conducted by Lü Jia. Next season will see Mr. Wang return to the Met as Mercutio in a new Bartlett Sher production of *Roméo et Juliette*, conducted by Gianandrea Noseda. Concert and recital engagements this season include his UK recital debut at St George’s Hall in Liverpool as well as debuts with both the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and Philadelphia Chamber Music Society singing Brahms’s *Liebeslieder Walzer* and Schumann’s *Spanische Liebeslieder*, with Cecile Licad and Ken Noda. Highlights of Mr. Wang’s previous seasons include his house debut with the Metropolitan Opera as Fiorello in Rossini’s *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, a Flemish Deputy in *Don Carlo* under the baton of Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and his company debut in the Met’s Summer Recital Series. Additional roles include Count Almaviva in Mozart’s *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, Don Profondo in Rossini’s *Il Viaggio a Reims* with the Rossini Opera Festival at the Teatro Rossini, as well as Agamemnon in Gluck’s *Iphigénie en Aulide* conducted by Jane Glover, and Fieramosca in Berlioz’s *Benvenuto Cellini* conducted by James Levine, both with MET+Juilliard. On the recital and concert stage, Mr. Wang’s performances include his Carnegie Hall debut in collaboration with The Musical Olympus Festival, Alice Tully Hall debut with the I Sing Beijing Program and The New York City Opera Orchestra, Mahler’s *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* with the Santa Cruz Symphony, and the Voices of 2012 concert with the Budapest Symphony Orchestra MÁV in Pécs, Hungary. Additional appearances include Beethoven’s *Symphony No.9* and Xian Xinghai’s *The Yellow River Cantata* with the Hartford Symphony, and singing in the “Zürich Stiftung Opera Bel Canto Night” under the tutelage of Francisco Araiza in Zürich, Switzerland. Mr. Wang was the recipient of the 2nd Place Prize, the Zarzuela Prize, and the Audience Favorite Award at Plácido Domingo’s *Operalia* Competition in 2012, First Prize in the 2014 Gerda Lissner Foundation International Vocal Competition, and First Prize in the Alan M. and Joan Taub Ades Vocal Competition. Mr. Wang received his Bachelor of Music from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing and a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from The Manhattan School of Music and currently resides in New York.

## **SAVA VEMIĆ**

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS: 2016: Count Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula* with Lindemann Young Artists program, Bonze in *Madama Butterfly* with Metropolitan Opera; Ernesto in *Parisina d’Este* with Opera Orchestra of New York in Carnegie hall; 2014-15 Solo recital with Lindemann program, Roberto Devereux with Opera Orchestra of New York in Carnegie Hall; 2013-2014 season: Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at IVAI in Tel Aviv, Israel. 2012-2013 season: Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro* at IVAI, soloist in *Aficionados’ Concerts* at the Festival Esterhazy in Haydnssaal, Austria. Debut as Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Madlenianum Opera & Theatre in Belgrade. First Prize 2014 Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition; Danica Mastilović’s Award for the best student of

solo-singing department at University of Arts in Belgrade; Publikumspreis der Stadt Beeskow in the frame of the International Opera Course Oper Oder-Spree, Germany, 2011; First Prize 2010 15th International Competition of Young Musicians Petar Konjovic, Serbia; First Prize 13th Solo Singers Competition Nikola Cvejic; First Prize 2008 at 6th Solo Singers Competition Lazar Jovanovic, Serbia

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**Wednesday, May 4, 2016 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Rose Theater, Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall, Broadway at 60th Street, New York City**

**Parisina D'este**

Music by Gaetano Donizetti

Libretto by Felici Romani, after Byron's Poem *Parisina*

**Cast:**

**Parisina d'Este: Angela Meade**

**Ugo: Aaron Blake**

**Duke Azzo: Yunpeng Wang**

**Ernesto: Sava Vemic**

**Imelda: Mia Pafumi**

**The Opera Orchestra of New York**

**Eve Queler, conductor**

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