

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART'S

THE MAGIC FLUTE

A KENNETH BRANAGH FILM



THE MAGIC FLUTE

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Mozart's classic opera **The Magic Flute** is breathtakingly transformed in a spectacular new film version conceived and directed by Kenneth Branagh with a newly-adapted libretto by Stephen Fry. With musical director James Conlon conducting the Chamber Orchestra of Europe the film showcases a cast of rising young opera stars including Joseph Kaiser, Ben Davis and newcomer Amy Carson together with more established performers René Pape, Tom Randle, Lyubov Petrova and Silvia Moi.

The Magic Flute is a Peter Moores Foundation production, written and directed by Kenneth Branagh featuring an adapted libretto by Stephen Fry, produced by Pierre-Olivier Bardet with James Conlon as musical director and Daniel Zalay as music producer. For this production Branagh is reunited once again with Academy Award nominated production designer Tim Harvey and director of photography Roger Lanser. The behind-the-scenes team also includes editor Michael Parker, Olivier Award winning costume designer Christopher Oram and Academy Award® winning make-up and hair designer Sarah Monzani.



Running Time: 130mins
Release Date: 30th November 2007
Certificate: TBC

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SYNOPSIS

On the eve of the first global war a magical drama unfolds as Tamino sets forth on a perilous journey in pursuit of love, light and peace in a world afflicted by darkness, death and destruction. An eerie quiet descends over a landscape still untouched by conflict as Tamino waits anxiously with his fellow recruits for the command to go into battle. In the ensuing chaos he is transported to a twilight world caught between dream and nightmare where he is rescued from certain death by a trio of field nurses.



When Papageno (keeper of the canaries employed to detect the presence of gas in the trenches) stumbles onto the scene and attempts to take credit for saving Tamino, the Sisters dispatch the two soldiers on a deadly mission. The duo must rescue Pamina, the lovely daughter of the Queen of the Night, who has been kidnapped by the dark lord, Sarastro. What follows is a spectacular musical adventure in which the destiny of a pair of young lovers may help determine the fate of nations and the lives of millions.

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ABOUT THE FILM

It was Sir Peter Moores' long-held ambition to 'take opera out of the opera house' and reach new audiences that led to the making of this new film version of **The Magic Flute**, sung in English. Mozart's masterpiece has enjoyed huge popular appeal and captivated audiences at all levels, young and old, since it was first performed in 1791. Mozart's appeal is widespread and it is the opera's romantic adventure story of humanity and fellowship which has made it a perennial favourite for generations of opera-goers.



Although the film's financiers, the Peter Moores Foundation, considered a number of directors it was Kenneth Branagh's artistic and commercial success with the film adaptations of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Hamlet*, which convinced them that he was the director who would be able to undertake the considerable challenge of breathing cinematic life into **The Magic Flute**.

As producer Bardet explained, "I went to Kenneth Branagh for the obvious reason that he is extremely successful in translating theatre into movies with the Shakespeare plays. We have had to do the same with this opera, a translation from one medium to another one, because cinema and opera are very far from one another."

Branagh's energy and passion has ensured that this new version of **The Magic Flute** has the potential to be an extraordinary cinematic experience; visually breathtaking and weaving drama with comedy in an engaging way while focusing on a compelling story populated by extraordinary characters.

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THE SCRIPT

Once onboard, Branagh began writing the screenplay for **The Magic Flute** and approached his longstanding friend and collaborator, Stephen Fry, whose talents encompass his work as an actor, author and director, to adapt and create a new English language libretto for the production.



Drawing on the similarities between past and present, producer Bardet pointed out that, “When Mozart created **The Magic Flute** in the 18th Century it was supposed to be a very popular opera, dedicated to a wide and popular audience. That is why when it was written, the libretto was in German and not in Italian as most librettos were at that time. So in translating the libretto into English we were exactly on the same track as Mozart and Schikaneder in their time, which was to make it as accessible as possible. And English is today the main language in cinema.”

Describing how their collaboration worked Branagh added, “I gave Stephen the 120 page screen scenario with as much detail as possible about setting for each of the scenes, character descriptions as they applied to this version, and the different ways in which I intended to answer some of the questions Mozart and Schikaneder pose in the plot. He then took a literal translation of the libretto and we discussed how to reflect the vernacular of our chosen period (1916). We wanted wit and emotion, and Stephen is unafraid of both.”

The challenge for Fry in bringing the libretto up-to-date, while revealing the opera’s innate humour and comedy, was to find language with the most suitable meter and rhythm for a text which was originally written in German.

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As Joseph Kaiser, who plays Tamino commented, "Stephen Fry has done a great job ensuring there is enough of a similarity between the original and singing in English, it makes it very, very easy and sing-able." Similarly, Tom Randle who plays Monostatos also found the new libretto to be a great success, "It's a fairly open and free libretto which then allows us the scope to improvise in a way, without feeling too hemmed in." While Ben Davis, who plays Papageno, felt that Branagh and Fry's work made the opera more relatable with characters who really come to life, "I think Kenneth Branagh and Stephen Fry have endeavoured and succeeded in developing a language for the piece which really gets you involved in the characters' lives and makes you feel for them."



Branagh brought to the project his considerable experience of working in film, theatre and television, a unique skill-set which enabled him to work easily with performers who were more accustomed to the disciplines of the opera world. As Lyubov Petrova, who plays the Queen of the Night, pointed out, "Working with Kenneth Branagh was an amazing, unique experience. Being an opera singer we don't have the luxury to go so deep into the character and to work on every word, every feeling, and really discuss the character's development with the director and I had all those opportunities with Kenneth Branagh."

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THE SETTING

The Magic Flute has traditionally been realised within the confines of the theatre, employing a range of magical and surreal stagecraft. One of the key challenges for Branagh was finding a context in which to place his screen adaptation so that it would have resonance, relevance and meaning for contemporary audiences.



From Branagh's point of view, "The challenges had much in common with the Shakespeare films: translating great art into another medium without losing the very brilliance you wish to celebrate. But like Shakespeare, Mozart is very robust. **The Magic Flute** has been staged with settings as various as those that have been visited on Hamlet. It's been set on the Moon, in the circus, at Stonehenge, on the beach, and Mozart can live in all of them. One key for me, whatever the setting or approach, is a truthfulness to performance, whatever the extreme technical demands made by the subject matter, whether Shakespeare or Mozart."

Opting to confound traditionalists Branagh set his version of the opera in the early part of the Twentieth Century at a time when the first global conflict of the industrialised age dominated the world and demonstrated the incredible strength, resilience and killing power of modern states.

In clarifying this decision Branagh said that, "At the centre of **The Magic Flute**, is an exploration of conflict. This is embodied musically, and the development of the opera concerns itself with the resolution of warring opposites: the dark versus the light, love versus hate, and in our case, more directly, peace as opposed to war. The overt conflict is between Sarastro and the Queen of the Night. By giving each an army and presenting visually the landscape of the First World War, there is a sense of import and scale about the actions of these characters. The Great War provides a territory both literal and metaphoric that is as emotive and complex as the opera itself. It's also true that at this appalling moment in history, music, popular song, poetry, and laughter were part of the survival mechanism. The setting therefore allows romance, humour and the 'comic opera' to emerge equally forcefully. Finally, in terms of the elusive plot, it provides the scope for an epic adventure which can provide a suspenseful yet coherent cinema narrative."

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The war was fought at a time when patriotism and belief in the existing social hierarchy was at its height, beliefs that the war itself helped destroy and that the modern world would find very hard to understand. This was a period of great social change, of political, financial and domestic emancipation and a time of extraordinary cultural transformations. This was mirrored in the world of design with the emergence of modernism in De Stijl and Bauhaus; in the visual arts where the shock of the new in the world of painting was proclaimed by the rise of fauvism, expressionism, cubism, futurism and surrealism.



Preceded by a century of industrial transformation in much of Europe, with vastly increased populations, developing urbanisation, and new scientific inventions, the early Twentieth Century was the pivotal point between the Old World and all its inherent cultural values and a New World of modernity, progress and escalating change.

Commenting on the choice of setting production designer Tim Harvey noted that, "The fundamental notion that Kenneth Branagh came up with is that the war between the forces of darkness and the forces of light happens against a background which reminds us of the First World War. We aren't saying it is the First World War because it definitely isn't."

Branagh's decision to set the opera against the backdrop of the cataclysmic world-changing events of the early Twentieth Century gave credibility and a naturalistic setting for some of the opera's more familiar plot devices - the snake which almost kills Tamino at the beginning of the opera, is here the trail of mustard gas snaking around the trenches in which he is stationed; the Three Ladies are first encountered as ethereal nuns from a local cloister, and subsequently as nursing auxiliaries from a field hospital; the bird catcher in this version becomes the keeper of canaries used to test for gas; the Queen of the Night first arrives triumphant and heraldic astride a tank and while mimicking the passage of enlightenment in the story Sarastro's palace is transformed from war-ravaged ruin to celestial French chateau.

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THE CAST

In September 2004 working together with casting director Sarah Playfair, who is very knowledgeable about young, talented singers who sing in English, Branagh and Bardet embarked on a lengthy casting journey which would take them around the world in search of the definitive cast for this new adaptation of **The Magic Flute**. Following an intensive search scouring all the major international opera houses which specialise in nurturing new singers a list of 750 was short-listed to 60 names who were invited to London to audition with Branagh and musical director James Conlon. By March 2005 Branagh's vibrant cast of opera singers was in place; it included an international cast composed of rising young opera stars: Joseph Kaiser as Tamino, Ben Davis as Papageno, Silvia Moi as Papagena and newcomer Amy Carson as Pamina together with more established names from the opera world: René Pape as Sarastro, Lyubov Petrova as the Queen of the Night and Tom Randle as Monostatos. Together they formed an ensemble cast who under Branagh's careful tutelage would bring their combined skills, talent and enthusiasm to this new interpretation of **The Magic Flute**.



Commenting on his cast, Branagh noted that, "Although experience, with a few exceptions, was limited, enthusiasm and openness to a new way of working was limitless. The casting process was extensive and taxing for the artists. When it came to rehearsal, we spent a lot of time speaking the libretto, and making sure that we explored the psychology of the characters, and their relationships in detail before we even started to sing. We worked hard to create an atmosphere of trust. Most had never worked on a film before; I had never worked on an opera before. We were all strangers in a strange land. That makes you vulnerable and willing to listen and to learn. We all did a lot of both."

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Towards the end of 2005 at Shepperton Studios in South West London, Branagh brought together a behind-the-scenes production team of regular collaborators to realise his vision. It included the Academy Award nominated production designer Tim Harvey; director of photography Roger Lanser; choreographer Stuart Hopps; performance consultant Jimmy Yuill and production supervisor Simon Moseley. For a work which has often relied on theatrical stage effects for some of its more fantastical story sequences Branagh harnessed the full range of technology which is at the disposal of contemporary filmmakers and deployed special effects and CGI to fully realise his creative vision. Shot over four soundstages at Shepperton Studios **The Magic Flute** was one of the biggest British film productions to be shot in Britain in 2006.

One of the challenges, for the cast and filmmakers, in bringing this well known and much-loved opera to the big screen was that it was essential for this interpretation to appeal both to established audiences of opera lovers, as well as new audiences for whom this might be their first experience of opera. Commenting on the film's potential, Joseph Kaiser pointed out that, "Everything is aligned to make this as good a presentation of **The Magic Flute** as possible. You have great people, great musicians, great actors and a fantastic director who really believes in the story. I think it's a story that should be shared to a greater audience, a new audience."

For Lyubov Petrova what makes this possible is, "First of all it's Mozart. The music is just gorgeous and it speaks to everyone. I think it's easy to enjoy it and also the story is so magical." While elaborating on what **The Magic Flute** means to him Tom Randle continued, "It's a fairytale; it's a morality play; it's a very complex symbolist numerical thing, it works on so many levels. It's exquisite music, it's charming music, it's childish music, it's all sort of things, so it's a very good piece to take a child to. It's like a first date movie, it touches all the right buttons and it's not overtly sophisticated for people who might be a little afraid of the word 'opera'." These views are also shared by Ben Davis, who added, "I think that **The Magic Flute** is a great piece because it has everything. It has drama, it has comedy, it has tragedy, it has a bit of everything for everybody. It's human and all about humanity and things we identify with."

In summing up these points of view, Branagh concluded, "The music is an invitation to the imagination. People will take from this Flute whatever they wish to. Reactions to a great work of art are necessarily subjective. Our production ideas attempt to release the opera, not to confine it. We offer a route map through setting and performance and in our treatment of the plot. We try to use the maximum resources and creativity of cinema, but ultimately we want the audience to engage with Mozart, as they wish. As Peter Moores says, 'We try to open the door, but not push people through.'"

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ABOUT THE OPERA

"I have this moment returned from the opera, which was full as ever... What always gives me most pleasure is the silent approval. You can see how this opera is becoming more and more popular..."

Mozart writing to his wife Constanze, 7-8 October 1791



When it was first performed in 1791 Mozart's opera **The Magic Flute** was a revelation of musical originality and diversity for an unsuspecting Viennese audience. They discovered a new form of German musical theatre which was an inspired marriage of lowbrow popular entertainment combined with high drama of the calibre which was usually only considered suitable for the refined tastes of nobility and the court. Mozart's first audiences were beguiled and at times confused by the narrative, the stylistic counterpoint and the contradictions inherent in the opera's story. It is these elements, however, which continue to challenge and fascinate contemporary audiences more than two centuries later.

The Magic Flute was originally conceived as a popular piece of musical entertainment which was specifically written to be performed in the Theater auf der Wieden, a temporary theatre located in Vienna's suburbs. The actor / manager Emanuel Schikaneder had taken a lease on the building and needed a popular work which his troupe could perform. He wanted a work which would make the most of the theatre's facilities for special stage effects, such as multiple trapdoors, wires for flying actors and props. It is very likely that Schikaneder, who also wrote the libretto, included contributions from his company. Mozart then transformed the fairytale format of the libretto, not least by choosing to write the opera as a German singspiel which meant that he was not restricted by the form and convention of his previous Italian Da Ponte trilogy (*Le nozze di Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*). The resulting opera deftly blends narrative and music in an extraordinary combination of rare simplicity and great complexity expressed with an exhilarating freedom which has ensured that **The Magic Flute** remains fresh and innovative to this day.

While **The Magic Flute** is not as strong on characterisation as the Da Ponte operas, Mozart's attention in telling the story was focused on issues which didn't necessarily need three dimensional characters for their propagation. For him it was the narrative and the journey which his characters embarked upon which were of greater significance. As

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a half-allegorical and half-farcical entertainment the narrative can be understood on many different levels; at its most straightforward it tells the story of a young man and woman's progress (Tamino and Pamina) from the darkness of ignorance to the light of understanding through the trials of experience, whilst contrasting this with the comic failure to progress to self-realisation of another young man (Papageno). It begins in darkness in the realm of the evil Queen of the Night and ends in glorious illumination, through the benign enlightenment demonstrated by Sarastro and his followers. It is against the grandeur of this solemn progress that the comic, almost slapstick, subplot of Papageno's "progress," that of the earthy, material man, is also played out. Schikaneder and Mozart had undoubtedly wanted their work to appeal to a popular audience who would be easily engaged by comic theatricalities and flamboyant stage effects. The resulting experience would have been similar to the contemporary tradition of British pantomime, still popular today.

Much has been written about the story's references to the symbolism and rituals of Freemasonry, the brotherhood which Mozart belonged to in the last years of his life. To this day it is a secret society which meets for the purpose of pursuing truth and "enlightenment" through charity, humanity, tolerance, and brotherly love, themes which are articulated in **The Magic Flute**. If however, you strip the opera of its Masonic veneer, the story still retains its symbolic symmetries and contrasts: light and dark, sun and moon, male and female, fire and water; gold and silver, which find expression in the plot and characters.

But more than any analysis of its narrative, it is the music Mozart composed for **The Magic Flute** which provides the constant "magic" of the opera. And whilst breaking with convention by adopting a singspiel format of popular German theatre, he still paid homage to some of his own musical heroes, notably: Bach, Handel and Gluck, all of whose influences his audiences would easily have recognized.

For a two act opera to be so self-contained within a two and a half hour time frame Mozart's other great innovation was his economy of style. Aware that the boisterous audiences of the popular theatre would not have been so indulgent of the overblown Italian arias and recitative favoured in Viennese court circles, Mozart contained his music within a concise framework, his technical proficiency and flair enabling him to work through an elaborate drama at a breathtaking pace, in which narrative and musical harmony are so effortlessly matched.

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PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

The Peter Moores Foundation is the principal financier of **The Magic Flute**. It was established in 1964 by Sir Peter Moores in order to develop his charitable aims, in music and especially in the fields of opera, the visual arts and through education, health, youth, social and environmental projects in order “to get things done and open doors for people.” Recognising the opportunities he had been given to explore and enjoy these areas in his youth, his life-long aim has been to create similar opportunities for others, especially young people.



With its specific interest in supporting opera sung in English translation the Peter Moores Foundation aims to reach the broadest possible audience for opera, while at the same time targeting and developing new audiences, particularly children and young adults. It has provided well over two hundred young singers with financial and other practical help; it has made it possible for Chandos Records to issue the world's largest catalogue of operas recorded in English translation, funding nearly fifty definitive recordings to date. It has also enabled Opera Rara to record rare bel canto repertoire which would otherwise remain inaccessible to the general public. In live performance, the Peter Moores Foundation has encouraged the creation of new work, schemes to attract new audiences, financed the publication of scores, especially for world premières of modern operas, and enabled rarely heard works to be staged by British opera companies and festivals.

Branagh's **The Magic Flute** is the Foundation's first venture into film, the result of Sir Peter Moores' determination to make opera more accessible and more popular. Speaking recently about the film and Branagh's involvement he said “for a long time I had thought of making a film of **The Magic Flute** in English. I thought it could reach a wider audience, far outside the opera house. So it was wonderful when Kenneth Branagh agreed to direct the film. He is a visionary filmmaker with a proven record of translating theatrical experiences into film and has worked with the singers in enormous detail and with infectious enthusiasm.”

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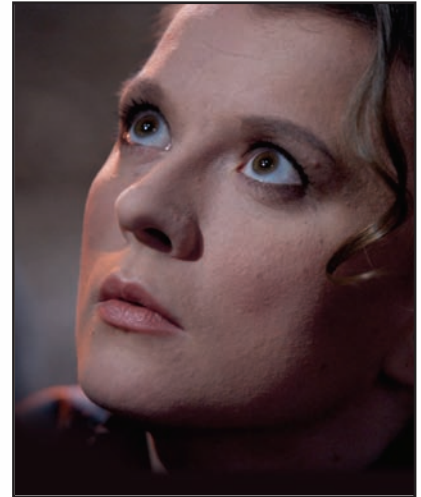
ABOUT THE CAST

Lyubov Petrova – Queen of the Night

Russian-born, Lyubov Petrova was a Lindemann Young Artist of the Metropolitan Opera making her company debut as Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, a role she has reprised at Los Angeles Opera, the Paris Opera, the Pittsburgh Opera, the Dallas Opera and will make her debut in Madrid in the role at the Teatro Real.

Other highlights include *Elvira* in *I puritani* for Palm Beach Opera; Metropolitan Opera performances of *Oscar* in *Un ballo in maschera*, *Sophie* in *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Blonde* in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, and *Adele* in *Die Fledermaus*. She sang *Lucia di Lammermoor* for the Washington Opera and returns there for *Gilda* in *Rigoletto*. She was at the Spoleto, USA Festival also for the title role in *Lakmé* and as *Despina* in *Così fan tutte*.

She returns to the Glyndebourne Festival in Prokofiev's *Betrothal in a Monastery* and to the Pittsburgh Opera in *Roméo et Juliette*. She is a graduate of the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow.



René Pape – Sarastro

René Pape, one of the world's most exciting singers, is a Dresden-born resident of Berlin who considers New York's Metropolitan Opera his operatic "home away from home." He has appeared at the Met every season since 1995, and has given role debuts of four major roles there: *Méphistophélès* in *Faust*, *Gurnemanz* in *Parsifal*, *Escamillo* in *Carmen*, and the Old Hebrew in *Samson et Dalila*. James Levine conducted the *Parsifal* and *Samson* performances.

Pape first sang most of his other great roles in Berlin under Daniel Barenboim, including *Boris* in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* in 2005: *Sarastro* in *Die Zauberflöte*, the title role in *Don Giovanni*, *Rocco* in *Fidelio*, *Fasolt* in *Das Rheingold* and *Hunding* in *Die Walküre*; *King Henry* in *Lohengrin*, *Pogner* in *Die Meistersinger*, and *King Mark* in *Tristan und Isolde*. Additionally, at his home house he sang his first *Ramfis* in *Aida*, as well as *Orest* in *Elektra*, *Leporello* and *Figaro*.



"René Pape is an artist who thrills his audiences with charisma, intelligence and a one-in-a-million voice: the luxurious timbre of Pape's supple, expressive bass is unmistakable, its velvety, dark-brown texture shot with ear-catching flashes of brightness," wrote the editor of *Opera News* of his first *Méphistophélès* in April 2005.

Pape's American appearances during the 2005-06 season include the Boston Symphony Orchestra concert performances of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and two Wagner roles at the Met: *King Henry* in *Lohengrin* and *Gurnemanz* in *Parsifal*. In Europe he sings *Sarastro* in a production of **The Magic Flute** in Modena, with Claudio Abbado, which will appear on DVD.

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Mr. Pape made his debut at Bayreuth under Levine in 1994 as Fasolt in *Das Rheingold*; at London's Royal Opera in *Lohengrin* in 1997 under Valery Gergiev; at the Opéra National de Paris under James Conlon in *Tristan* in 1998; and at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Meistersinger's Pogner under Christian Thielemann in 1999. He was one of a quartet of singers chosen by James Levine to participate in a "Schubertiade" at New York's Carnegie Hall in February 2004.

Pape received his musical education in Dresden as a member of the world-famous Kreuzchor, and at the Dresden Conservatory. Sir Georg Solti invited him to sing Sarastro in a new production of **The Magic Flute** at the 1995 Salzburg Festival, where Pape first attained international status. Musical America named him Singer of the Year in 2001.

Tom Randle – Monostatos

Tom Randle began early studies in conducting and composition but a scholarship to study voice soon meant a change in career direction. He made his debut with the English National Opera as Tamino in **The Magic Flute** and has repeated the role with great success at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Hamburg, New Zealand and the Covent Garden Festival. Well known for his vivid and committed stage portrayals and a unique ability to embrace a wide variety of repertoire, Tom has emerged as one of the most exciting and versatile artists of his generation.

Engagements have included Tom Rakewell for the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Netherlands Opera, Lausanne and Bordeaux, Bénédicte for WNO's *Béatrice et Bénédicte*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* for Geneva and Brussels Operas, Don Ottavio in Munich and Los Angeles, Pelléas in Paris and London, Idomeneo for Scottish Opera, Achilles in Tippett's *King Priam*, for ENO and the Reisopera, *The Fairy Queen* in Aix-en-Provence, Gerald in Delibes' *Lakmé* in Australia, Joe in *Carmen Jones* in Washington, the title role in Hasse's *Solimano* at the Innsbruck Festival and Staatsoper Berlin.

More recently, Tom appeared in *La traviata* at Opera North, *Rheingold* and *Orfeo* at ENO, *Kátya Kabanová* at WNO, and *Death of Klinghoffer* in Rotterdam and sang the title role in *Peter Grimes* in Antwerp. For De Nederlandse Opera he appeared in Peter Stein's production of Henze's *Bassarides*, to great success. Future operatic engagements include Tamerlano for Scottish Opera, the title role in *Orfeo* for the Handel and Haydn Festival in Boston, and *Khovanshchina* at WNO. He will return to Amsterdam for *St François d'Assise*.

Tom Randle made his Royal Covent Garden debut as Essex in Phyllida Lloyd's highly acclaimed production of *Gloriana*, which was later released as a feature film for BBC Television. Other appearances for the Royal Opera include Johnny Inkslinger/Paul Bunyan and the Fool/Gawain.

Tom Randle is very active in the field of contemporary music with several world premières to his credit, many of which were written especially for him. This includes the role of Dionysus in John Buller's opera *The Bacchae* for ENO, the world première of Peter Schat's opera *Symposium* for the Netherlands Opera, and the world première of John Tavener's oratorio *The Apocalypse* for the BBC Proms. He also created the role of Nunez in Mark-Anthony Turnage's opera *The Country of the Blind*, which was written for the 50th Anniversary of the Aldeburgh Festival, and premiered and recorded Penderecki's oratorio *Credo* for the Oregon Bach Festival.



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His intense portrayal of Judas in the world première of Birtwistle's *Last Supper* under Daniel Barenboim at the Staatsoper Berlin (as well as Glyndebourne) won him outstanding critical acclaim.

Tom Randle devotes equal time to an active concert career, singing with many of the world's leading orchestras including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, the London Symphony, Philharmonic and Philharmonia Orchestras, the Israel Philharmonic, The English Concert with conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Michael Tilson Thomas, Sir Colin Davis, Yan-Pascal Tortelier, Ghennadi Rozhdestvensky, Richard Hickox, Trevor Pinnock, and Ivan Fischer.

Amongst his recordings are the title role in Handel's *Samson* with Harry Christophers on Collins Classics, Vaughan Williams' *A Cotswold Romance* with the London Symphony Orchestra and Hickox for Chandos (both premiere recordings) and orchestral works by Luigi Nono on the EMI label. Tom also appeared as Molqui in the groundbreaking film version of John Adams' *Death of Klinghoffer* for Channel 4, released on DVD.

Joseph Kaiser – Tamino

Joseph Kaiser is recognized by audiences for his beauty of tone, for the intelligence of his programming, and for an innate sense of style and elegance. He is developing rapidly into one of the most gifted artists of his generation and enjoys success in opera, oratorio, and concert throughout North America and Europe.

Engagements of the present and future seasons include *Die Fledermaus*, *Salome*, and *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, *Die Zauberflöte* and *Salome* at the Metropolitan Opera, *Béatrice et Bénédict* at Chicago Opera Theatre, a new production of *Eugene Onegin* at the Salzburg Festival conducted by Daniel Barenboim, the North American premiere of Kaija Saariaho's *Adriana Mater* at the Santa Fe Opera in a production by Peter Sellars, a Covent Garden debut in *Salome*, and both *Jenůfa* and *Die Zauberflöte* at the Los Angeles Opera with James Conlon. He also appears in concert with Sir Simon Rattle and the Philadelphia Orchestra as well as with Daniel Barenboim and the Staatskapelle Berlin.



Joseph Kaiser joined the prestigious Lyric Opera Center for American Artists in the spring of 2004 and, during his residency with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, he has been involved in productions of *The Midsummer Marriage*, *Fidelio*, *Aida*, and *Das Rheingold*, singing under the batons of Sir Andrew Davis and Christoph von Dohnányi. He made his Ravinia Festival debut in summer 2005 in Chicago Symphony Orchestra performances of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with Christoph Eschenbach and Verdi's *Otello* with James Conlon and also debuted with The Philadelphia Orchestra in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*.

Highlights of recent seasons also include concerts with Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic, *Das Rheingold* at the Aix en Provence Festival in a new production by Stéphane Braunschweig, conducted by Sir Simon Rattle, the world premiere of John Musto's *Volpone* with the Wolf Trap Opera Company, the Baz Luhrmann production of *La bohème* on Broadway, New York City Opera productions of *Carmen* and John Philip Sousa's *The Glassblowers*, a Lincoln Center Festival debut in Bright Sheng's opera *Silver River*, Glimmerglass Opera productions of *The Glassblowers* and the world premiere of *Central Park*, and *Sweeney Todd* at Calgary Opera.

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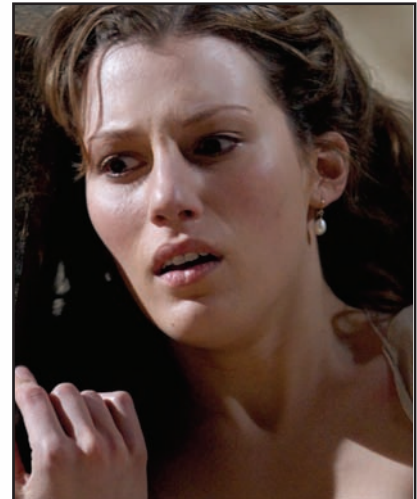
Equally committed to the art of recital, Mr. Kaiser has appeared at the Caramoor Festival, in a joint programme with Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, which was presented under the auspices of the New York Festival of Song, in Chicago at the Chicago Humanities Festival, in Montreal with the André Turp Society, and on the Debut Series of the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, receiving a national broadcast on the CBC Radio network. He joined a roster of emerging artists on a special gala program, hosted by Renée Fleming and Sherrill Milnes, under the auspices of the George London Foundation and, as the Song Prize winner of the Julian Autrey Foundation, offered his New York solo recital debut, both at Weill Hall. A recent solo recital in Montreal was honored by CBC-Radio Canada as the Outstanding Young Vocalist Recital of the Year and given a national broadcast on the network.

A prize winner in the 2005 Plácido Domingo Operalia Competition, Joseph also was recognized with the Robert Jacobson Memorial Grant by the George London Foundation, first prizes at the Elardo Opera Competition and Orlando Opera Heinz Rehfuss Singing Actor Award, and numerous scholarships at McGill University.

Amy Carson – Pamina

Playing the role of Pamina in Kenneth Branagh's film version of Mozart's **The Magic Flute** marks Amy Carson's feature film debut. Amy was born in Bristol, England in 1983. At the age of eight she began her professional singing career as the youngest chorister in the first ever Cathedral Girls Choir at Salisbury Cathedral.

During her school years, Amy took part in many professional concerts and recordings. She performed regularly, not only as a classical singer and musician, playing four instruments, but also as a jazz and pop singer, writing her own songs for voice and piano. She also performed frequently on stage and received distinction in both LAMDA silver and gold dual examinations. Her acting roles included Madame de Tourvel in *Dangerous Liaisons*, Cecily in *The Importance of Being Ernest* and Farrah Delamitri in Ben Elton's *Popcorn*.



Before going to University, Amy took a year out from studying to teach English and Drama in a missionary school in Bangladesh. She recently graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge with a Degree in Music. Whilst at Cambridge, she took part in many concerts as a soloist and she played several lead roles in student-directed operas including *Dido in Dido and Aeneas* and the First Lady in **The Magic Flute**.

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Ben Davis – Papageno

Quickly earning a reputation as a triple-threat performer, the acclaimed young actor Ben Davis is difficult to pin down. In his feature film debut, Davis, a baritone, will star as the hi-jinks-causing Papageno in Branagh's film version of **The Magic Flute**.

Davis is hardly a stranger to the stage, however, having starred in Baz Lurhmann's *La Bohème* in both New York and Los Angeles. Demonstrating his versatility, he also took over the comic leading role opposite Tony Award Winner Sutton Foster in *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. Prior to that, Davis had a successful run as the lead actor in both the Broadway and road companies of *Les Misérables* and is one of only very few to have played two leads in the show.

He has performed on the stage in Los Angeles, starring in the Pasadena Playhouse's production of *110 Degrees in The Shade* and also at the Hollywood Bowl in Bernstein's *Mass and Mame*, earning rave reviews for each. Ben has also starred in concert appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. Davis was awarded the Tony Honor of Excellence in Theatre and LA Ovation Award for his role in *La bohème* as well as a nomination by the Drama Critic's Circle. He is also the recipient of the prestigious Singers' Development Foundation Award.

He has appeared in numerous television shows including a role in the highly successful CBS series *NUMB3RS*. He resides in Los Angeles.



Silvia Moi – Papagena (young)

Norwegian soprano Silvia Moi studied at the University College of Opera in Stockholm and the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo. From the autumn of 2004 she continued her training at the Royal College of Music, London where she graduated in the spring of 2005. In school productions she appeared as Lucia in *The Rape of Lucretia*, Susanna in scenes from *Le nozze di Figaro* and Despina in *Così fan tutte*.

Silvia Moi has sung Despina in *Così fan tutte* under the baton of Manfred Honeck, directed by Jonathan Miller in Bornholm (Denmark), Vienna and Stockholm. During the summers of 2003 and 2004 she sang Oscar in *Un ballo in maschera* at the Confidence

Theatre in Stockholm. The spring of 2004 included her debut with the Stockholm Royal Opera as Katie in *Kastrater* in the premier production at the Drottningholm Court Theater. The current spring includes Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Malmö Opera.

Recent and future engagements include Ninetta in *La finta semplice* at the Salzburg Festival (summer 2006), Servilia in *La clemenza di Tito* at the Norwegian Opera and Nanetta in *Falstaff* at the Stockholm Royal Opera.

On the concert platform Silvia Moi has appeared as Susanna in scenes from *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and Alan Gilbert. In her home country she has appeared with the symphony orchestras of Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim and Kristiansand. Silvia Moi has also performed in Germany, Czech Republic and South Africa. In December 2004 she appeared as Papagena at the Nobel banquet in Stockholm.

Silvia Moi has received a number of scholarships, among which the Joel Berglund Scholarship, the Leverhulme Trust and the Swedish Royal Academy of Music's Scholarship.

THE MAGIC FLUTE

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Kenneth Branagh – director and screenplay

Kenneth Branagh's acting theatre credits include *Another Country* (Queens Theatre, London 1982), *The Madness* (Upstream Theatre, London 1983), *Francis* (Greenwich Theatre, London 1983), *Henry V*, *Golden Girls*, *Hamlet* and *Love's Labours Lost* (Royal Shakespeare Company 1984-1985), *Across The Roaring Hill* (King's Head Theatre, London 1985), *The Glass Maze* (Almeida Theatre, London 1985), *Romeo And Juliet* (Lyric Studio, Hammersmith 1986) which he also directed, *Hamlet* (Royal Shakespeare Company 1992-1993) *Richard III* at the Sheffield Crucible (2002) and *Edmond* at the National Theatre (2003).

For Renaissance Theatre Company *Public Enemy* (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith 1987) which he also wrote, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (on tour, Phoenix Theatre & Elsinore Castle 1988-1989), *Look Back In Anger* (on tour, Lyric Theatre and for Thames Television 1989), *A Midsummer's Night* and *King Lear* (World Tour 1989-1990) which he also directed, *Coriolanus* (co-production with Chichester Festival Theatre 1992).

Kenneth's television credits include *The Billy Plays* (1981 to 1986), *To The Lighthouse* (1982), *Maybury* (1982), *Derek* (1983), *The Boy In The Bush* (1983), *Ghost* (1985), *Coming Through* (1985), *Fortunes Of War* (1986-1987), *Strange Interlude* (1987), *The Lady's Not For Burning* (1987), *Shadow Of A Gunman* (1995), *Conspiracy* (2001) *Shackleton* (2002) and *Warm Springs* (2005), a film about Franklin D. Roosevelt for HBO.

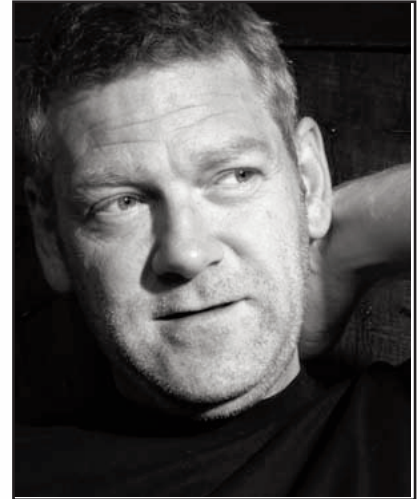
He has written: *Plays - Tell Me Honestly*, which has been performed in London, Newcastle and Oslo, *Public Enemy*, performed in London, New York and Los Angeles. His autobiography *Beginning*, for Chatto & Windus. Adapted Shakespeare's *Henry V*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Hamlet* for the screen, which were published by Chatto & Windus. Wrote the screenplay for *In The Bleak Midwinter*, published by Newmarket Press. Plus *Love's Labour's Lost* and *As You Like It*, not published.

Kenneth directed John Sessions' *The Life Of Napoleon and Napoleon, The American Story* (for Renaissance, on tour and in the West End 1987), *Twelfth Night* (for Renaissance at Riverside Studios, London 1987), co-directed *Uncle Vanya* with Peter Egan (Renaissance UK tour 1991), *The Play What I Wrote* (David Pugh Ltd, Wyndham's Theatre, 2001, 2002 and on Broadway 2003) and *Ducktastic* (David Pugh Ltd, Albery Theatre, 2005).

For Renaissance Films, he has acted and directed in *Henry V* (1989), *Peter's Friends* (1992), the short film *Swan Song* (1992), and *Much Ado About Nothing* (1992).

His other acting film credits include *High Season* (1985), *A Month In The Country* (1985), *Swing Kids* (1992), *Othello* (1995), *The Proposition* (1998), *The Gingerbread Man* (1998), *Theory Of Flight* (1998), *Celebrity* (1999), *Wild Wild West* (1999), *Alien Love Triangle* (2000), *How To Kill Your Neighbour's Dog* (2001), *Rabbit Proof Fence* (2002), *Harry Potter And The Chamber Of Secrets* (2002) and *Five Children & It* (2004).

Directing and acting film credits are *Dead Again* (1990-1991), for Paramount Pictures; *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994) for American Zoetrope and TriStar Pictures, the full-length version of *Hamlet* (1996) for Castle Rock Entertainment, and *Love's Labour's Lost* (2000) for his own production company Shakespeare Films.



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Kenneth wrote and directed *In the Bleak Midwinter* (1995) for Castle Rock and has recently finished directing *As You Like It* (2005).

Kenneth's radio credits include: starring in and co-directing with Glyn Dearman *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, and with John Gielgud, *King Lear*. He has also recorded *Diaries of Samuel Pepys*, *The Laurie Lee Trilogy*, *Wilfred Owen's Anthem for Doomed Youth*, *Cousin Phyllis*, *Last Enemy*, *Long Shot*, *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, *Captain and The Enemy*, *The Outsider*, *Mortal Engines*, *The Magician's Nephew*, *Chekhov's Short Stories*, *Mendelssohn's A Midsummer's Night Dream* with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and *Richard II*, which won the Drama Awards at the 2002 Spoken Word Awards and played the Fool to Paul Scofield's *King Lear*.

Kenneth has narrated *Cinema Europe - The Other Hollywood*, the 1995 Academy Award winning documentary *Anne Frank Remembered* as well as *The Great Composers*, *Universal Horror*, *The Cold War*, *Galapagos: The Enchanted Voyage*, *El Dorado* and *The Periwig Maker*, which was nominated for the Academy Award® for animated short film in 2001. In addition he has also narrated *Walking With Beasts*, *Walking with Dinosaurs*, *Walking with Monsters*, *The Ballad of Big Al*, *World War 1 in Colour*, *Cecil B DeMille – American Epic*, *The Private Life of Giuseppe Verdi*, *The Tramp and the Dictator*, *Lon Chaney – A Thousand Faces* and *Goebbels – Experiment*.

Stephen Fry – libretto (adaptation)

Contemporary man of letters and renowned wit Stephen Fry was born in 1957 and educated at an unfeasibly large number of educational establishments, most of which rapidly tired of him. At Cambridge University, however, he met and worked with, amongst others, Emma Thompson and Hugh Laurie, a lifelong friend and comedy partner. Stephen Fry's first play *Latin!* received a Scotsman Fringe First Award and has subsequently been performed across the UK. The Footlights revue he wrote and performed with Thompson, Laurie, and Tony Slattery was televised by the BBC.

There followed *Alfresco*, a comedy series for Granada (along with Laurie, Thompson, Ben Elton, and Robbie Coltrane), three series of *Blackadder* with Rowan Atkinson (and Hugh Laurie again), four series of *A Bit of Fry and Laurie* with Hugh Laurie (both for the BBC) and also with Hugh, four series of *Jeeves and Wooster* for Granada TV and WGBH Boston.

He recently hosted three series of the BBC quiz show *QI* and completed two series of *Absolute Power* co-starring John Bird, for the BBC and appeared in numerous single dramas for television, including *Tom Brown's Schooldays*.

As a stage actor he performed in Alan Bennett's *Forty Years On*, Michael Frayn's *Look, Look* and Simon Gray's *The Common Pursuit*. He won a Drama Circle Award and a Tony nomination for his work on the revived musical *Me and My Girl* which ran for years and years on Broadway and in the West End.

His numerous film appearances include performances in *Peter's Friends*, *Wilde*, and *Gosford Park*. He wrote and directed *Bright Young Things* in 2003 and narrated *A Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* in 2005.

Stephen Fry has written four best-selling novels, an autobiography (*Moab Is My Washpot*) and most recently, a layman's guide to the writing of poetry, *The Ode Less Travelled*, published by Random House. He is well-known amongst a younger generation as the reader of the audio-book versions of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels.



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Pierre-Olivier Bardet – producer

Following an education and training in the sciences and engineering, Pierre-Olivier Bardet joined the Vidéo Ciné Troc association in 1977. It was during his nine year tenure that he met and collaborated as distributor with Johan van der Keuken (1978) and Frederick Wiseman (1981), becoming in 1983 one of the first French independent documentary producers. In 1987 he joined the French record label Erato in order to set up its audiovisual production division. At the same time he met Bruno Monsaingeon for whom he would become executive producer.

In 1990 Pierre-Olivier Bardet created Idéale Audience with Hélène Le Coeur as an audiovisual production and distribution company specializing in music films; since its inception it has built up a reputation for distinctive, world-class productions. Following the establishment of a distribution division in 1992, which is now established as a subsidiary company entitled Idéale Audience International, he went on to create a DVD division in 2002 which has been responsible for releasing 45 titles in the Classic Archive Collection. While retaining his principal role as producer this has enabled him to distribute and edit documentaries made by Johan van der Keuken, Frederick Wiseman and Alexander Sokurov.

Since 1983, Pierre-Olivier Bardet has produced more than 80 films; the majority have been documentaries which have regularly received awards and critical acclaim at international film festivals. Bardet's first venture to bring opera to the screen was the film version of *Madame Butterfly* directed by Frédéric Mitterrand which was nominated for two César Awards in 1996. Bardet has produced and executive produced a number of influential classical music documentaries including *Polígono Sur* which received a special mention for the CICAIE prize at the 2003 Berlin Film Festival as well as a number of special art projects including *Death In The Seine* by Peter Greenaway, *The Cowboy And The Frenchman* by David Lynch, *Elegy Of A Voyage* by Alexander Sokurov and *The Last Letter* by Frederick Wiseman which was selected for the Cannes Film Festival official competition in 2002.

Sir Peter Moores – Peter Moores Foundation

Sir Peter Moores was born in Lancashire and educated at Eton College and Christ Church, Oxford, where he studied Italian and German. Whilst a student he worked at Glyndebourne as a behind-the-scenes administrator, before going to study at the Vienna Academy of Music, where he produced the Austrian premiere of Benjamin Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*. At the same time he was also an assistant producer at the Vienna Opera, working with Viennese artists in Naples, Geneva and Rome, before returning to England in 1957 to join his father's business, Littlewoods. He was Vice-Chairman of Littlewoods in 1976, Chairman from 1977 to 1980 and remained a director until 1993. His public appointments include: from 1981-1983, Governor of the BBC, Trustee of the Tate Gallery from 1978 to 1985 and from 1988 to 1993 a Director of Scottish Opera.

Sir Peter Moores established the Peter Moores Foundation when he was a young man in 1964 in order to realize his charitable aims, especially in music and the visual arts. Through his charities he has disbursed more than £104 million to a wide variety of arts, environmental and social causes "to get things done and open doors for people."

Sir Peter's philanthropic work began with his passion for opera: in his twenties he helped a number of young artists in the crucial, early stages of their careers, several of whom, Dame Joan Sutherland, Sir Colin Davis and the late Sir Geraint Evans amongst them, became world-famous. Since then the Peter Moores Foundation has provided well over two hundred young singers with financial and other practical help, enabling a significant number to become international opera stars.

Through his Foundation, Sir Peter has encouraged people to explore opera – often for the first time: the Opera in English series produced in association with Chandos Records is now the world's largest catalogue of operas recorded in English translation, whilst the Foundation has enabled Opera Rara to record rare bel canto repertoire which would otherwise remain inaccessible to the general public.

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In live performance, the Foundation has encouraged the creation of new work and schemes to attract new audiences, financed the publication of scores, especially for world premieres of modern operas, and enabled rarely heard works to be staged by British opera companies and festivals.

Projects supported by the Foundation to help the young have ranged from a scheme to encourage young Afro-Caribbean adults to “stay at school” for further education to the endowment of a Faculty Directorship and Chair of Management Studies at Oxford University.

In 1993 the Foundation bought Compton Verney, a Grade 1 Georgian mansion in Warwickshire, designed by Robert Adam, with grounds by Capability Brown. Compton Verney House Trust was set up by Sir Peter to transform the derelict mansion into a world-class art gallery that would provide an especially welcoming environment for the ‘first-time’ gallery visitor. The gallery, which houses six permanent collections, a Learning Centre for all ages and facilities for major visiting exhibitions, was opened in March 2004 by HRH the Prince of Wales.

He received the Gold Medal of the Italian Republic in 1974, an Honorary MA from Christ Church, Oxford, in 1975, and was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Northern College of Music in 1985. In 1992 he was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire by HM the Queen. He was appointed CBE in 1991 and received a Knighthood in 2003 for his charitable services to the arts.

James Conlon – musical director

Over the course of nearly 30 years of conducting James Conlon has cultivated a vast symphonic, operatic and choral repertoire, and developed enduring relationships with the world's most prestigious symphony orchestras and opera houses. Since his New York Philharmonic debut in 1974, Conlon has regularly conducted the leading orchestras of North America and Europe. He served as principal conductor of the Paris National Opera from 1995-2004, and has conducted more than 240 performances at the Metropolitan Opera since his debut there in 1976.

He has also conducted at Teatro alla Scala (Milan), the Royal Opera at Covent Garden (London), the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (Florence). James Conlon becomes music director of Los Angeles Opera in the 2006-07 season, and is currently music director of the Ravinia Festival (the summer home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra), and the Cincinnati May Festival. Through worldwide touring to North and South America, Asia, and throughout Europe, an extensive discography, and frequent television appearances in Germany, France, Italy, and the US, he is also one of today's most respected and recognized conductors. Conlon was awarded France's Legion d'Honneur in 2001 by the President of the French Republic, Jacques Chirac.