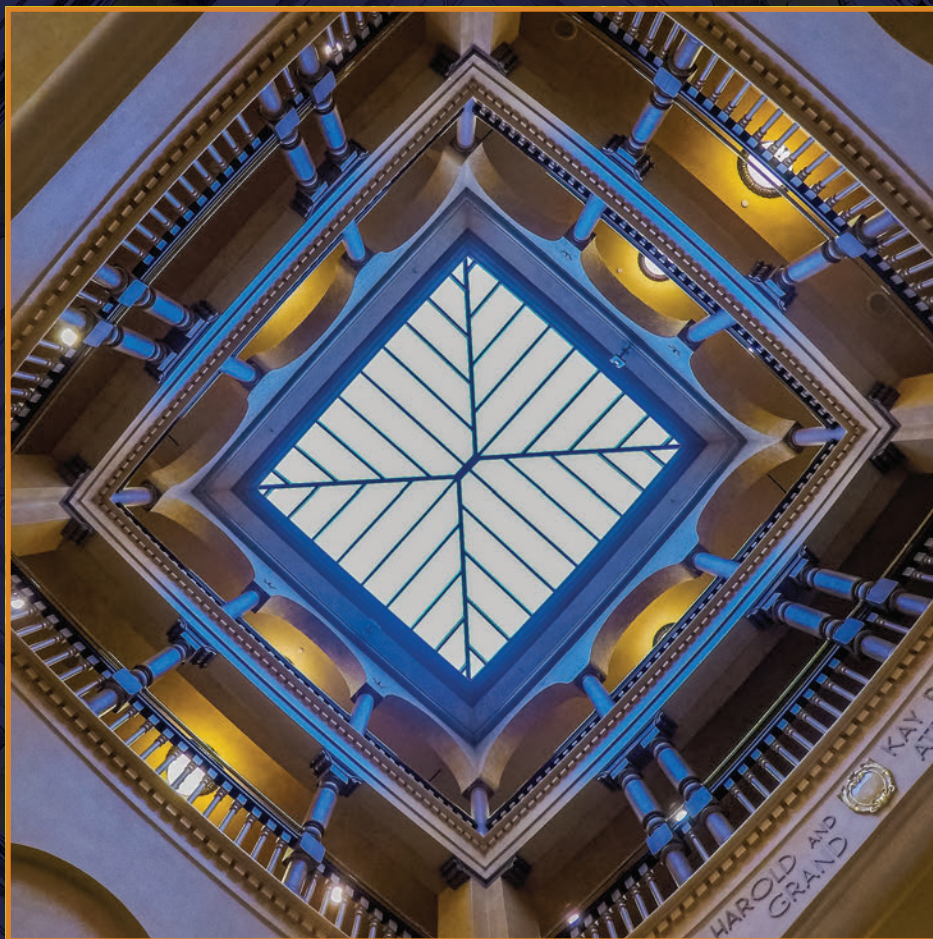




SARASOTA OPERA

Victor DeRenzi, Artistic Director

Richard Russell, General Director



2021 Fall Season

La scala di seta

William E. Schmidt Opera Theatre



Oct. 29, 31m Nov. 3, 9, 11, 13m

La scala di seta

The Silken Ladder

POETRY BY GIUSEPPE FOPPA

Taken from a French farce of the same title

Sung In Italian

Cast

DORMONT, guardian

Samuel Schlievert

GIULIA, his ward

Hanna Brammer +

LUCILLA, Giulia's cousin

Maria Miller *

DORVIL

Christopher Bozeka

BLANSAC

Alexander Boyd

GERMANO, Dormont's servant

Sean Anderson

Sarasota Orchestra

* Resident Artist

+ The Mr. and Mrs. Robert Arthur Sponsored Artist

Gioachino
Rossini

*Farsa comica
in one act*

CONDUCTOR
Victor DeRenzi

STAGE DIRECTOR
Stephanie Sundine

COSTUME DESIGNER
Howard Tsvi Kaplan

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Ken Yunker

HAIR AND MAKE-UP DESIGNER
Kellen Eason

ASSISTANT CONDUCTORS
Jesse Martins
Lindsay Woodward

SURTITLE SUPPLIER
Words for Music

SURTITLE TRANSLATOR
Victor DeRenzi



THE SETTING IS A VILLA NEAR PARIS

A young woman, Giulia, lives with her guardian, Dormont. Dormont would like her to marry Blansac, unaware that she has secretly married her true love, Dorvil. Every night, she rolls a silk ladder out of her window for Dorvil to climb into her rooms. It is late afternoon, and Giulia is exasperatedly trying to usher the family's servant, Germano, out of her rooms so that Dorvil can make his exit unseen. Blansac is to arrive at the house at any moment. Giulia has hatched a plan to encourage Blansac, who is a bit of a Lothario, to fall for her cousin Lucilla, who is already in love with him. When Blansac arrives, he and Giulia have an intimate conversation, observed by both Dorvil and Germano (the servant), both of whom are eavesdropping. Both men come away believing that Giulia has romantic feelings for Blansac, when in fact she is laying the groundwork for her cousin Lucilla. The plan works: when Blansac meets Lucilla, he is smitten. That night, when Giulia puts out the silk ladder Dorvil arrives, still upset, followed by Blansac, who believes he has been summoned by Giulia.



Gioachino Rossini

The love-struck Lucilla and meddling Germano are both hiding nearby, trying to understand what is going on. Finally Dormont, awakened by the commotion, arrives. It is left to him to sort things out. After all is explained, he blesses Giulia's marriage to Dorvil, and, as a bonus, consents to Lucilla and Blansac's union. In the end, everyone is happy.

Marina Harss is a writer, journalist, and critic based in New York City and Sarasota writing on all aspects of dance and the arts. Her articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Guardian* and other publications.

World Premiere: **TEATRO SAN MOISÉ, VENICE, MAY 9, 1812**

When Rossini's one act farce *La scala di seta* ("The Silken Ladder") premiered at Venice's Teatro San Moisè on May 9, 1812, he already had five operas under his belt. Besides the farces he wrote for Venice, the twenty-year-old composer had written works for Ferrara and Bologna, and before the end of 1812 he would make important debuts in Milan and Rome.

Based on François-Antoine-Eugène de Planard's French text for the "opéra-comique" *L'Échelle de soie* (which text librettist Giuseppe Foppa sometimes translated word-for-word into Italian), the opera relies on stock comic plot devices like dramatic irony, mix-ups, characters hiding and spying, etc. What distinguishes *La scala di seta* from his previous efforts, however, is that it is the first Rossini opera where we possess an entire autograph in the composer's own hand.

At first glance, this may seem an unimportant distinction, but it is hard to stress just how much tinkering scholars, and even composers themselves, sometimes do to make earlier works seem more advanced than they are. Charles Ives reworked many of his youthful compositions later in life to make them more avant-garde, and Mozart's first compositions were in fact written down by his father, who may or may not have done the bulk of the creative heavy lifting. In Rossini's case, his first five operas sound to our ears very much like Rossini in all the ways we know and love him, but these works rely almost entirely on copies (and sometimes copies of copies) of manuscripts whose origins we do not know.

Thus, we do not know if some of his musical signatures were retroactively inserted into his music by well-meaning copyists, or if the musical creations sprung forth, fully formed and mature from Rossini's pen.

Rossini's most recognized musical signpost, the Rossini crescendo is a case in point. In music, a crescendo (from the Italian *crescere*, "to grow" or "to increase") typically describes an increase in volume. In the case of the Rossini crescendo, every available musical element (rhythm, instrumentation, harmonic and melodic activity, etc.) is increased to create an almost hysterical sense of heightened intensity. This compositional device is present in some form or another in all of Rossini's operas, but in *La scala di seta* it is wholly present right from the start, in the overture. In addition to demonstrating Rossini's creative maturity, the autograph manuscript of *La scala di seta* also gives us an interesting insight into the playful nature of Rossini's personality. In the introduction to the tenor aria, Rossini writes a *piacere del Sig.re Monaelli* ("As Mr. Monaelli pleases") which serves as both a musical invitation to the tenor (Raffaello Monelli) to improvise, and a play on the tenor's name ("mona" signifying both "idiot" and a more vulgar term in Venetian slang). When the clarinet introduces the main melody of the tenor aria, instead of simply writing *dolce* (sweetly), Rossini implores his clarinetist to play *dolce per le cinque piaghe di Cristo* (sweetly, by the five wounds of Christ!)

Perhaps Rossini's most apt quip comes at the end of the famous overture (a piece that has remained a staple of the symphonic repertoire, almost since its inception), where he writes *Accidenti* ("Damn!"). This sentiment, which the audience inevitably shares, is a wonderful moment of self-awareness that the piece is very good indeed.

Anthony Barrese is a freelance composer and conductor. He has led several productions with Sarasota Opera and with Opera Southwest where he is Artistic Director and Principal Conductor.



SEAN ANDERSON

baritone
New York, New York

Germano *La scala di seta*

Vincenzo Gellner *La Wally* (2020)
Iago Otello (2012)
Sarasota Opera Debut: Eisenstein
Die Fledermaus (2006)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Telramund *Lohengrin*
(Opera Southwest/New Mexico)
Marcello *La bohème*
(Baz Luhrman Broadway
production, Indianapolis Opera)
Sharpless *Madama Butterfly*
(Knoxville Opera)



ALEXANDER CHARLES BOYD

baritone
Purcellville, Virginia

Blansac *La scala di seta*

Tarabotto *L'inganno felice*,
Bruschino Padre *Il signor
Bruschino* (2021)
Le Dancaire *Carmen*,
Maruccio *Tiefland* (2018)
Sarasota Opera Debut:
Apprentice Artist (2012)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Tonio *Pagliacci*
(St. Petersburg Opera)
Robert Redgate and King Kittypuss
Mr. Roger's Operas
Donner *Das Rheingold*
(Pittsburgh Festival Opera)
Imperial Commissioner
Madama Butterfly (Tulsa Opera)



CHRISTOPHER BOZEKA

tenor
Akron, Ohio

Dorvil *La scala di seta*

Sarasota Opera Debut:
Bertrando *L'inganno felice*,
Florville *Il signor Bruschino* (2021)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Nemorino *L'elisir d'amore*,
Pedrillo *Die Entführung
aus dem Serail*
(Houston Grand Opera)
Nadir Ali Babà (Opera Southwest)
Tom Rakewell *A Rake's Progress*,
Count Almaviva
Il barbiere di Siviglia
(Wolf Trap Opera)



HANNA BRAMMER

soprano
Traverse City, Michigan

Giulia *La scala di seta*

**The Mr. and Mrs. Robert Arthur
Sponsored Artist**
Isabella *L'inganno felice*,
Sofia *Il signor Bruschino* (2021)
Juliette *Roméo et Juliette* (2020)
Sarasota Opera Debut:
Apprentice Artists (2016)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Nedda *Pagliacci*
(St Petersburg Opera)
Micaëla *Carmen*
(Wichita Grand Opera)
Lauretta *Gianni Schicchi*
(Opera Tampa)



VICTOR DERENZI

conductor
New York, New York

La scala di seta

Sarasota Opera Artistic Director
and Principal Conductor since 1982
L'inganno felice, *Il signor Bruschino*
(2021)
La bohème, *La Wally* (2020)
Turandot, *Nabucco*, *Rigoletto* (2019)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Gala Concert: A Verdi Celebration
(Opéra de Montréal)
La fanciulla del West
(Théâtre de l'Opéra de Nice)
Un ballo in maschera, *La bohème*
(Canary Islands Spain)
Maestro DeRenzi is a Knight of the
Italian Republic and the only
conductor to have performed all
of Verdi's music.



KELLEN EASON

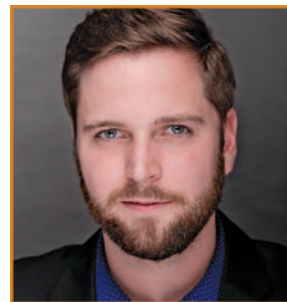
hair and make-up designer
Portland, Oregon

Hair and Make-up Designer

Sarasota Opera Debut Winter 2021

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Wig and make-up designer
H.M.S. Pinafore,
Il barbiere di Siviglia
(Eugene Opera)
Wig and make-up assistant
Madama Butterfly, *Le nozze di
Figaro*, *Don Pasquale* (partial listing)
(Florida Grand Opera)
Wig and make-up assistant
Il barbiere di Siviglia,
La Cenerentola, *Orfeo ed Euridice*
(Portland Opera)



KEVIN HARVEY

tenor
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Resident Artist

Winter Resident Artist (2021)
The coachman *Prologue to
La serva padrona*
Sailor *Dido and Aeneas*
Winter Apprentice Artist (2020)
Sarasota Opera Debut:
Apprentice Artist (2019)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Sailor *Dido and Aeneas*
(Central City Opera)
Bénédict *Béatrice et Bénédict*
(Asheville Lyric Opera)
Dormont *La scala di seta*
(Opera Southwest)



BRYN HOLDSWORTH

soprano
Stewartsville, New Jersey

Resident Artist

Sarasota Opera Debut

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Clorinda *La Cenerentola*
(Nashville Opera)
Krysia *Out of Darkness:*
Two Remain
(Atlanta Opera)
Norina *Don Pasquale*
(Crested Butte Music Festival)

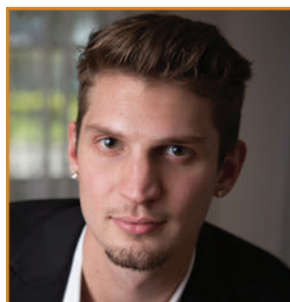
**HOWARD TSVI KAPLAN**

costume designer
Oceanside, New York

Resident Costume Designer
Sarasota Opera Debut 1998

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Alley Theatre, Asolo Center,
Florida Grand Opera, ABC, PBS
Ringling Bros. Clown College,
OperaDelaware, Baltimore Opera,
Kentucky Opera, Barter Theater

**JAMES ANTHONY
MANCUSO**

tenor
Shoreham, New York

Resident Artist

Sarasota Opera Debut:
Apprentice Artists (2020)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Papageno *Die Zauberflöte*
(Imperial Symphony Orchestra)
Gabriel von Eisenstein
Die Fledermaus
(Florida Southern College Opera)

**JESSE MARTINS**

conductor
Sapiranga, Brazil

Assistant Conductor***La scala di seta***

Sarasota Youth Opera Music
Director & Music Administrator
Conductor *Dido and Aeneas*
Program & Music Director of the
Resident Artists/Chorus Master
(2021)

Program & Music Director of the
Apprentice Artists/Chorus
Master (2020)

Conductor *Die Zauberflöte*,
Brundibár (2019)
Sarasota Opera Debut: 2011

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Assistant Music Director
(Opera Factory/New Zealand)

**MARIA MILLER**

mezzo-soprano
Paducah, Kentucky

Resident Artist***Lucilla La scala di seta***

Sarasota Opera Debut:
Resident Artist (2021)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Apprentice Artist
(Des Moines Metro Opera)
Nancy Smith *Blind Injustice*,
Scott Davenport Richards
(Cincinnati Opera)
Amahl and the Night Visitors
(Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra)

**KYLE OLIVER**

baritone
Plano, Texas

Resident Artist

Sarasota Opera Debut:
Resident Artist (2021) *The chef*
Prologue to La serva padrona

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Zurga *Les Pêcheurs de perles*
(Bel Cantanti Opera)
Berto *Un avvertimento ai gelosi*,
Petrucchi *Lucrezia Borgia*,
Ceprano *Rigoletto*
(Caramoor Opera)
Dandini *La Cenerentola*, Yamadori
Madama Butterfly, Count
Robinson *Il matrimonio*
segreto, Zurga *Les Pêcheurs de*
perles, Father *Hänsel und Gretel*
(Pittsburgh Opera)

**SAMUEL SCHLIEVERT**

tenor
Genoa, Ohio

Dormont *La scala di seta*

Winter Studio Artist (2020)
Tybalt *Roméo et Juliette*
Matteo Borsa *Rigoletto*,
Pang *Turandot*, Abdallo
Nabucco (2019)

Sarasota Opera Debut:
Apprentice Artist (2018)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Alfredo *La traviata*
(Painted Sky Opera/Oklahoma)
Rodolfo *La bohème*,
Ruggero *La rondine*
(Oklahoma City University)

**CURTIS SERAFIN**

music staff
New Windsor, Maryland

Assistant Conductor

Sarasota Opera Debut:
Apprentice to the music staff
(2021)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Resident Coach and Assistant
Conductor, Chicago Summer
Opera

Staff pianist, vocal coach -
Manhattan School of Music
Vocal piano fellow, Tanglewood
Music Center

**LAURA SOTO-BAYOMI**

soprano
Secaucus, NJ

Resident Artist

Sarasota Opera Debut

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Lucilla *La scala di seta*
Isabella *L'inganno felice*
(Opera Southwest)
Norina *Don Pasquale*
(Chautauqua Opera Company)



JAKE STAMATIS

baritone
Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania

Resident Artist

Sarasota Opera Debut

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Marcello *La bohème*
(Seagle Festival)
Papageno *Die Zauberflöte*,
Guglielmo *Così fan tutte*
(Opera Memphis)
Escamillo *La tragédie de Carmen*
(Lake George Music Festival)



STEPHANIE SUNDINE

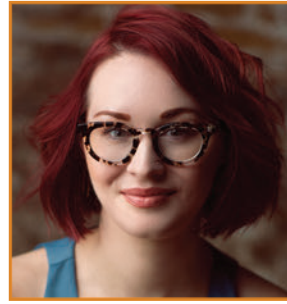
stage director
Moline, Illinois

La scala di seta

Il signor Bruschino (2021)
La Wally (2020)
Stage Director for the Apprentice
Artists
Sarasota Opera Debut: Tatiana
Eugene Onegin (1984)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Turandot
(Des Moines Metro Opera)
La fanciulla del West, *Aida*, *Tosca*
(Utah Opera)
Les Pêcheurs de perles
(Madison Opera, Atlanta Opera,
Opera Carolina)



LINDSAY WOODWARD

music staff
Salt Lake City, Utah

Assistant Conductor

La scala di seta

Winter Assistant Conductor
La serva padrona, *Il signor*
Bruschino (2021)
Assistant Conductor
La bohème, *La Wally* (2020)
Sarasota Opera Debut: Assistant
conductor *Die Zauberflöte*, *Rita/*
Il segreto di Susanna (2019)

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Coach *La bohème*, *Rigoletto*, *Thaïs*,
Bolcom Dinner at Eight, *Don*
Pasquale (Minnesota Opera)
Chorus Master/Coach *Madama*
Butterfly, *La Cenerentola*, *Roméo*
et Juliette, *Gianni Schicchi*
(Brevard Music Center)



KEN YUNKER

lighting designer
Seattle, Washington

Resident Lighting Designer

Sarasota Opera Debut 2007

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

2004-2017 Principal Lighting
Designer (Alliance Theatre
Company/Georgia)
1993-2015 Resident Lighting
Designer (Atlanta Opera)
Lighting Designer
(FIO Americas Brazil, Florida Grand
Opera, Bermuda Arts Festival,
Utah Opera, New Orleans Opera,
Tulsa Opera, Opera Santa
Barbara, Opera New Jersey,
Toledo Opera, San Antonio
Opera)



Tosca, 2015 Sarasota Opera production. Photo by Rod Millington

sarasota orchestra™

VIOLIN

Daniel Jordan, *concertmaster*
 Christopher Takeda, *associate concertmaster*
 Jennifer Best Takeda, *assistant concertmaster*
 Samantha Bennett, *principal second*
 Meghan Jones, *assistant principal second*

Felicia Brunelle
 Léna Cambis
 Anne Chandra
 Carlann Evans
 Chung-Yon Hong
 Mia Laity
 Margot Zarzycka

VIOLA

Rachel Halvorson, *principal*
 Matthew Pegis, *assistant principal*
 Nathan Frantz
 Daniel Urbanowicz

CELLO

Natalie Helm, *principal*
 Christopher Schnell, *assistant principal*
 Isabelle Besançon
 Cheeko Matsusaka

DOUBLE BASS

John Miller, *principal*
 John Price, *assistant principal*

FLUTE

Betsy Hudson Traba, *principal*
 Carmen Bannon

OBOE

Jonathan Gentry, *principal*
 Nicholas P. Arbolino

CLARINET

Bharat Chandra, *principal*
 Laura Stephenson Petty

BASSOON

Fernando Traba, *principal*

HORN

Joshua Horne, *co-principal*
 Shelby Nugent

LIBRARY

Justin Vibbard, *principal*
 Paul Greitzer, *assistant principal*



The Musicians of the Sarasota Orchestra are proudly represented by the American Federation of Musicians, Gulf Coast Local 427-721.