

THE JERUSALEM OPERA | THE JERUSALEM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Lina Cavalieri (1874-1944): Italian soprano and actress



TOSCA
Act II
Il TABARRO
(The Cloak)

By
G. Puccini

Libretto Tosca:
Giuseppe Giacosa
and **Luigi Illica**

Libretto Il tabarro:
Giuseppe Adami

Conductor:
Omer Arieli

Stage Director:
Daniel Lasry

October 2025



THE JERUSALEM FOUNDATION
مؤسسة مندوب القدس
הקרן לירושלים



האופרה הירוקה למליה
THE JERUSALEM OPERA

Dear Audience,

We are delighted to welcome you to this special evening with the Jerusalem Opera, featuring two masterpieces by Giacomo Puccini: Act II of **Tosca** and the one-act opera **Il tabarro**, the first work in his **Il Trittico** trilogy.

Tosca is set in early 19th-century Rome and presents a dramatic confrontation where power, passion, and loyalty collide. **Il tabarro**, set on a barge along the River Seine in Paris, tells a tale of desire and jealousy among ordinary people – culminating in a chilling conclusion.

Despite their differences, the two operas share a deep inner connection: both place their protagonists at moments of extreme tension and moral reckoning. Performed together, they intensify one another – and their being sung by the same cast weaves a subtle thread between them.

The evening will open with “Il tabarro” , followed by “Tosca” (Act II) after the intermission.
We wish you a moving and unforgettable experience.

Acknowledgements:

We wish to acknowledge our appreciation over the years to:

Our patrons and the friends of the Jerusalem Opera: Susan Frid, Zakai Ben Chaim and Yaron Shiloh, Julie and Jacob Schorr (Gold Sponsors), Murray Newman and Harry Koster (through the Jerusalem Foundation, Canada), Arnold and Victoria Kisch, Haya and Jaakov Zerem, Susan and Jacques Gorlin, Yehuda and Nurit Rosenberg, Yaakov and Ora Ringel, Adina and Jonathan Halevy, Leah and Moshe Felber, Rocky and Heshie Billet, Dina Avni, Peter Kals, Willy S. Kals, Deborah Goldstein, Yair and Ayala Marocco, Anat Shebo-Perlmutter, Ephraim Abramsohn, Zvi and Yehudith Ohrbach, David Brodet, Aharon Schwartz and Nehama Friedman, Irene and Eli Pollack, Rami and Noga Kook, Karin and Schlomo Goldhour, Istituto italiano di cultura.

Our volunteers: Debbie Azran, Francoise Cafri, Gulie Chamiel, Shlomo Fox, Pnina Yaish, Joe Weizman, Tuvia Blubstein, Peter kals.

All the opera lovers, patrons and friends of the Jerusalem Opera, who prefer to remain anonymous, whose generous donations and constant support have enabled us to realize the dream of creating and sustaining opera performances in Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem Opera

The Jerusalem Opera was first established in November 2011 with the main goals of presenting opera productions of the highest quality in Jerusalem and promoting Israeli artists.

The Jerusalem Opera's main productions are: the operas by W.A Mozart "Don Giovanni", "The Marriage of Figaro", "The Magic Flute", "Così fan tutte", as well as the operas by G. Puccini "Madame Butterfly", and "Il tabarro", G. Rossini "The Barber of Seville", E. Humperdinck "Hansel and Gretel", J. Haydn "La Canterina", C. Gounod "La Colombe" in an Israeli premiere, G. Verdi "Rigoletto" and "La Traviata", G. Donizetti "L'elisir d'amore", the French operettas "Le mariage aux lanternes" by Jacques Offenbach and "Une éducation manquée" by Emmanuel Chabrier, both Israeli premieres, "The Diary of Anne Frank" by G. Frid, "La Contadina" by J. Hasse, "Armida and Rinaldo" by G. Sarti – all an Israeli premiere.

The productions of the Jerusalem Opera are staged to highly professional standards and enjoy enthusiastic response from both public and critics.

The Jerusalem Opera receives financial support from the Jerusalem Municipality and from the Israel Ministry of Culture and Sport. However, the future of this inspirational and important initiative depends on the generosity of supporters of culture and others who regard opera as an important piece in the cultural mosaic of Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel.

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We have chosen to present Act II of “Tosca” as an independent work—an unusual choice, although it has been done before. This act is structured as a complete and independent dramaturgical unit, with its own exposition, development and dramatic climax, leading to a powerful conclusion. It thus offers a full musical and theatrical experience even outside the context of the entire opera.

Pairing Act II of “Tosca” with “Il tabarro” is not incidental. Despite the differences between the two operas – one a political drama in the heart of Rome and the other an intimate tragedy on the banks of the Seine – there are substantial imaginative threads that connect them. Both take place in an enclosed space and during a short moment in time and they both position the main characters before an impossible moral dilemma. Tosca must choose between the life of her loved one and her honor and faith. Michele stands broken before the infidelity of his wife and the urge for revenge.

Their reactions are different: Tosca cries for solace from God, whereas Michele, in an opposite reaction, makes a chilling statement: “Peace is found only in death”. However, both reactions lead to a decisive moment, where murder becomes an expression of hopelessness and desperation.

Each one of the operas presents a portrait of a person pushed to the brink. By bringing both pieces together in one evening, this personal dimension of the characters is intensified and invites the audience to a powerful and unforgettable dramatic experience.

The Participants:

Omer Arieli, Musical Director and Conductor

Daniel Lasry, Stage Director

The Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra

Production Team:

Producer

Costumes, Set and Props

Assistant Director & Stage Manager

Sound

Lighting

Makeup and Hair

Rehearsal Pianist

Video Production & Still Photography

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Poster for the Opera *Tosca* Premiere, January 1900, at the Opera House of Rome.
Artist Adolfo Hohenstein.

The Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra:

Ofer Amsalem Director General

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Leah Frenkel Director, Marketing and Sales

Guy Nisenzon Marketing and Sales

Yaniv Kuris Site and Media



Tosca

Act II

The Singers:

Yasmine Levi-Ellentuck	Floria Tosca
Florin Estefan	Baron Scarpia
Ivan Defabiani	Mario Cavaradossi
Marc Shaimer	Spoletta
Lev Elgardt	Sciarrone

Backstage singers:

Noa Hope Sion, Angelina Tolstikova, Sireen Tarbosh, Ori Ahinoam, Sergey Bartenyev, Ron Zaika, Ehoud Yaari

Extras:

Sergey Bartenyev, Ron Zaika	policemen
Ori Ahinoam	Roberti
Ehoud Yaari	Judge

"Tosca" - Opening Remarks

Tosca, Puccini's 1900 masterpiece, is a powerful drama of passion, power, and faith, set in Rome during the historical struggles between Napoleon's forces and the Papal State and its allies. The entire plot unfolds over a single day—between June 17 and 18, 1800.

The opera is based on the play *La Tosca* by Victorien Sardou (1887), which captivated Puccini with its dramatic intensity. Giuseppe Verdi had also shown strong interest in adapting it into an opera, but eventually left the opportunity to Puccini. The libretto was written by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, following Puccini's meticulous instructions and under his close supervision.

The opera's three acts are set in well-known historical locations in Rome: the Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle, the Palazzo Farnese, and the Castel Sant'Angelo—all of which still stand today and are open to the public.

Since its premiere in Rome on January 14, 1900, *Tosca* has become one of the most beloved and frequently performed operas in the international repertoire—a gripping work that continues to move audiences and present dramatic and musical challenges for its performers.

Tosca - Plot Summary

Act I

Angelotti, an escaped political prisoner, seeks refuge in the **Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle**, where he encounters the painter, **Cavaliere Mario Cavaradossi**, who is working on a painting. Tosca, the celebrated opera singer and Cavaradossi's lover, arrives at the church. She becomes suspicious of a possible relationship between Mario and the woman depicted in the painting, and is overcome by jealousy. Cavaradossi reassures her, then leaves the church and helps Angelotti hide.

Baron Scarpia, the chief of police, suspects that Cavaradossi is aiding the fugitive. He shows Tosca a fan that was found in the church, which belongs to the **Marchesa Attavanti**—a woman who resembles the figure in the painting—and thus ignites Tosca's jealousy. Tosca hurries to Cavaradossi's home, unaware that Scarpia's men are following her in order to arrest him. Meanwhile, the **Te Deum** prayer is being sung in the church.

Act II

At the police headquarters in the **Palazzo Farnese**, Scarpia interrogates Cavaradossi about Angelotti's whereabouts. When Cavaradossi claims to know nothing, Scarpia orders him to be tortured. Tosca breaks down upon hearing her lover's cries of agony and reveals the location of the hiding place.

When news arrives of Napoleon's decisive victory at the **Battle of Marengo**, the tortured Cavaradossi exclaims in triumph for liberty. Enraged, Scarpia orders that he be imprisoned and executed by hanging.

Left alone with Tosca, Scarpia proposes a deal: he will free Cavaradossi in exchange for her submission. Reluctantly, she agrees—but demands a safe-conduct pass for the two of them to leave the city. Scarpia consents, but deceives her—while she is present, he instructs his men to carry out a mock execution that will, in fact, be real. When Scarpia approaches her, Tosca stabs him to death with a knife she secretly took from his table, and escapes the palace.

Act III

At the **Castel Sant'Angelo**, Tosca joins Cavaradossi before the execution and tells him it will only be a simulation. But the soldiers shoot him for real. When Tosca discovers the betrayal, she throws herself from the top of the fortress walls, crying her final words: "*Scarpia, we shall meet before God!*"

Tosca - Historical Background

At the time the opera takes place—the year 1800—Europe was in turmoil following the French Revolution, which brought with it new ideas of liberty, equality, and liberation from the authority of the Pope and the Church. France, under **Napoleon Bonaparte**, was at war with coalitions of conservative European powers, including Austria and Britain, who sought to halt the spread of revolutionary ideals.

Rome was the heart of the **Papal States**, a territory that had existed since the year 754 and controlled vast regions of central Italy. These lands were gradually annexed to the Kingdom of Italy, and in 1870 the Papal States ceased to exist. Their last remnant, the **Vatican**, was only officially recognized in 1929.

The Papal States experienced political upheaval and conquests during Napoleon's reign: in 1798, Napoleon invaded Rome and established the **Roman Republic**, inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution. But in 1799, Rome was recaptured and papal rule restored. In 1800, at the **Battle of Marengo**, Napoleon defeated the Austrians and restored French control over northern Italy. In 1809, the Papal States were formally annexed to France. Only after the **Congress of Vienna** (1814–1815), which redefined the balance of power in Europe and Napoleon's defeat at the **Battle of Waterloo** (1815), did the Papal States regain their independence.

The key historical event in the background of the opera's plot is the **Battle of Marengo**, fought on **June 14, 1800**. At first, Austrian forces led by **Baron Melas** successfully pushed back the French army, but later in the day Napoleon reversed the tide and won a decisive victory for France. This outcome posed an existential threat to the Papal States but brought hope for freedom to supporters of the revolution—represented in the opera by **Mario Cavaradossi**.



The opera begins just a few days after the battle, when news of Melas's initial victory reaches Rome. Until the final confirmation of Napoleon's victory – received midway through Act II – the leaders of the Papal regime, led by Scarpia, the chief of police, believe in their triumph and celebrate it: in Act I, the Te Deum prayer is sung in the church as a public thanksgiving for victory; and in Act II, a grand ball is held to honor Melas's success, with Tosca, Rome's celebrated diva, performing. However, news of Napoleon's victory dramatically shifts the political landscape and threatens the personal fates of the leaders of the Papal regime.

Michael Friedrich Benedikt von Melas (1729-1806)

The Three Locations in Tosca

The three settings of the opera are far more than mere backdrops – they are charged with religious, political, and symbolic meaning, and represent the progression of Tosca and Cavaradossi's loss of freedom.

Act I: Sant'Andrea della Valle

A magnificent Baroque church in the heart of Rome, dedicated to Saint Andrew – who in Christian tradition represents humility, loyalty, and deep faith. These values starkly contrast with the events of the opera: it is precisely in this sacred space that a drama of passion, brutality, and evil begins to unfold.

Act II: Palazzo Farnese

A grand 16th century Renaissance palace, which during the time of the opera serves as the headquarters of the papal police. The transition from the church to the palace underscores a shift from a place of faith to a center of coercion and fear – its splendor and grandeur serving only as a deceptive façade.

Scarpia himself warns Cavaradossi during the interrogation:

"Questo è luogo di lacrime" – **"This is a place of tears."**

Historical irony: Today, Palazzo Farnese houses the French Embassy in Italy – the very Republican France that was Scarpia's sworn enemy and for whose cause Cavaradossi was executed.

Act III: Castel Sant'Angelo

A massive, round fortress on the banks of the Tiber River. Throughout history, it has served as a military base, a prison, and a refuge for popes during times of danger. During the time of the opera, it functions as a political prison and execution site. Here, the journey of lost freedom reaches its tragic peak: Cavaradossi is executed, and Tosca chooses death.

Castel Sant'Angelo opens the opera and also brings it to its end: it is from here that Angelotti escapes at the beginning, filled with hope for freedom – and it is here the protagonists return at the end, when that hope is lost. As in all great dramas, the cannon shot fired from this fortress in Act I – signaling Angelotti's escape – foreshadows the final act, where the circle closes once more in shooting, violence and death.

Scarpia's words at Palazzo Farnese – **"Questo è luogo di lacrime"** ("This is a place of tears") – echo here as a tragic truth and, in many ways, as the opera's bitter epitaph.

Tosca and Othello - A Dual Comparison

It is hard to avoid a comparison between two separate parallel scenes: one in *Tosca*, the opera by Puccini, and the other in *Othello*, Shakespeare's great tragedy, also well known in Verdi's operatic adaptation.

In Act I of *Tosca*, Scarpia declares:

“Jago ebbe un fazzoletto, ed io un ventaglio!” – “Iago had a handkerchief, and I – a fan!”

This is a direct statement of identification with Shakespeare's great villain, and it forges a link between the two works.

- *In this line, Puccini and his librettists deliver a double homage – both to Shakespeare, the creator of Iago, and to Verdi, composer of the opera Otello, who himself had once wished to compose La Tosca, but relinquished the project in favor of Puccini.*

1. Manipulative Use of an Innocent Object to Achieve a Goal

- Scarpia stumbles upon the fan of the Marchesa Attavanti in the church, shows it to Tosca, and plants in her heart the suspicion that her lover is betraying her. He knows she will rush to Cavaradossi – and in doing so, unknowingly lead him to Cavaradossi's hiding place and thus enabling his and Angelotti's arrest.
- Iago deceitfully obtains Desdemona's handkerchief – a token of love from her husband Othello, commander of the Venetian army – and plants it in the home of Cassio, Othello's lieutenant. This he does to fabricate evidence of Desdemona's infidelity, destroy their marriage, and take revenge on Othello for promoting Cassio instead of him.*

But there is a fundamental difference between the two: Scarpia takes advantage of an object found by chance, whereas Iago fabricates the “evidence” with his own hands. Scarpia is driven by lust and a desire to crush political opponents, while Iago acts from pure, unprovoked malice.

* In Shakespeare's play (and not in Verdi's opera) Iago delivers here his well-known warning:

*“O, beware, my lord, of jealousy, It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock
The meat it feeds on”*
("Othello" Act III scene 3)

2. Iago Standing over the Collapsed Othello vs. Tosca Facing Scarpia's Body

Othello collapses physically and emotionally, torn between his love for his wife and his suspicion of her betrayal. Iago stands over him and says:

“Ecco il leone” – “Behold the lion”:

The lion – symbol of power and might, the great general of Venice (whose emblem is the winged lion) – now lies defeated and crushed at his feet. Iago’s schemes have succeeded, and he expresses this with a cynical, mocking line that embodies his wicked delight and pleasure at Othello’s downfall.

In contrast, Tosca, after killing Scarpia reluctantly and in self-defense, without any premeditation, stands before his corpse and exclaims:

“E avanti a lui tremava tutta Roma!” – “And before him, all Rome trembled!”

Her words are a dramatic proclamation of the end of Scarpia’s reign – the tyrant who ruled Rome through fear and terror. Tosca, the very woman he sought to exploit, is the one who brought him down. For her, this is a moment of relief and liberation, but also one of shock and disbelief.

Both lines are declarations of triumph – but spoken by vastly different characters. **Iago** is the embodiment of pure evil, crushing Othello without a shred of remorse. **Tosca**, by contrast, is a tragic heroine who commits murder out of necessity, and is left shaken and distraught. This reveals the moral chasm between the two.



Castel Sant'Angelo on the banks of the Tiber River, Rome

Il tabarro

The Singers:

Florin Estefan	Michele
Yasmine Levi-Ellentuck	Giorgetta
Ivan Defabiani	Luigi
Noa Hope Sion	Frugola
Marc Shaimer	Tinca
Lev Elgardt	Talpa
Angelina Tolstikova	Seamstress, Lover
Sireen Tarbosh	Seamstress, Lover
Sergey Bartenyev	Lover
Ron Zaika	Song Seller, Organ Grinder
Ehoud Yaari, Ori Ahinoam, Sergey Bartenyev, Ron Zaika	Stevedores

Il tabarro - Opening Remarks

Il tabarro is a short opera, dark in tone, yet rich in dramatic and emotional intensity. It is the first of the three operas that make up **Il trittico**, Puccini's late triptych, completed in 1916. The opera is based on the play **La houppelande** by Didier Gold, which premiered in Paris in 1910 and caught Puccini's attention due to its somber atmosphere and realistic plot. The libretto was written by Giuseppe Adami.

The opera premiered at the **Metropolitan Opera** in New York in 1918, due to the ongoing First World War.

Set aboard a barge docked on the banks of the Seine in Paris, the opera presents a small slice of life – a microcosm of love, pain, and jealousy – in a tightly compressed narrative that unfolds over just two hours, from sunset until nightfall, ending in a chilling climax.

After several revisions by Puccini, the opera was presented in its final version in Rome in 1922. Since then, it has come to be appreciated as a significant work in its own right and is regularly staged in major opera houses around the world.

Il tabarro - Plot Summary

Paris, September 1910. A barge is moored at a quay on the River Seine. The sun is setting. The stevedores who have been unloading cargo from the barge are finishing their day's work. Their lives are hard, grim, and devoid of hope.

Giorgetta, the young wife of Michele – the older owner of the barge – is having an affair with Luigi, a young dockworker. Michele suspects that his wife is unfaithful. He tries to rekindle her love by reminiscing about their better days and the child they once had, now gone. But she rejects his affection.

Night falls. Giorgetta waits in her cabin for Luigi, who is to come when she gives the agreed-upon signal – a lit match in the dark. The hurt and angry Michele remains outside, wondering about the identity of his wife's lover. He lights his pipe. From a distance, Luigi sees the flame and mistakenly believes it is the signal he has been waiting for. He rushes to the barge, but is caught by Michele. Michele strangles him and hides his body under his **tabarro** (cloak).

Giorgetta comes out of the cabin and asks Michele for forgiveness, but to her horror, she discovers Luigi's lifeless body beneath her husband's cloak.



Boats Photograph by
Eugène Atget (1857-1927):
Photographe De Paris

Michele as the Dramatic Axis of "Il tabarro"

At first glance, *Il tabarro* appears to be a drama centered around a love triangle: husband, wife, and lover. But as the plot unfolds, it becomes clear that the heart of the drama does not lie in love or betrayal, but in the character of Michele – the only figure who undergoes true internal transformation. In contrast, Luigi and Giorgetta remain unchanged, but their illicit affair sets the story in motion: it shakes Michele's world, emotionally destabilizes him, and forces him to confront feelings of rejection, loneliness, and jealousy. It is Michele's response to this inner crisis – not the betrayal itself – that leads to the opera's tragic climax. Thus, Michele becomes the focal point of the opera's emotional and psychological drama.

Michele appears as a practical yet quiet and introspective man, hurt by his wife's emotional distance but not yet devoid of hope for reconciliation. In his duet with Giorgetta, he tries to revive their former intimacy, pleading with her: "*Resta vicino a me!*" ("Stay close to me!"). But Giorgetta coldly rejects him and even hints that he shares responsibility for the rift between them. She continues with: "*Diffidi...ma che credi?*" ("You don't trust me... what do you think?"), to which he replies: "*Non lo so nemmen io!*" ("I don't even know myself"). This is a rare moment in which the anguished Michele reveals his inner doubts and uncertainty.

At that very moment, a bell begins to toll – its sound echoing like a divine voice, warning Michele and urging him not to succumb to his wounded emotions, to restrain himself, and to grant Giorgetta one more moment of grace. But when the bell stops and silence falls, Michele cries out with rage and pain: "*Sgualdrina*" (whore) – a word that places the full blame on Giorgetta. Michele has decided not to forgive.

From this point on, Michele stands alone, caught in a storm of emotions and memories of their former love. These memories are represented onstage by the silhouettes of a couple exchanging words of love, ending with a promise to meet the next day:

A domani, mio amore! – Domani, amante mia!

These intimate words strike painfully at Michele's wounded heart, highlighting his despair: for Michele, there is no tomorrow, no future. He sees the lover as the one responsible for this – and resolves to take revenge.

Then the trumpet call from the nearby barracks is heard – *Il silenzio*, the nightly lights-out. But this is more than the end of a day; since Michele has already made his decision, it signals a total moral descent – a collapse of ethical boundaries.

Yet the trumpet may hold an even deeper meaning: it can be heard as an echo of the *Tuba Mirum* motif from the Requiem Mass – the trumpet that announces the Day of Judgment, when all souls must account for their actions. And Michele, too, will be called to account for his choice to take a life.

- Let us now turn briefly to the music: immediately after Giorgetta rejects Michele's plea for closeness, the character of the orchestral sound changes – becoming low, muted, and drawn-out, like heavy heartbeats that turn into a dark, somber rumble. These tones continue in the background like a shadow over the unfolding events. One could hear in them a deep sorrow over Michele's decision – a lament for the moral collapse and the impending tragedy, with the shadow of Judgment Day looming overhead.

The sounds culminate in a rolling drumroll, from which the great aria bursts forth.

Michele opens the aria with two words: “*Nulla, silenzio*” – Nothing. Silence. He knows that killing the lover will also mark the end of his own life, and he accepts it. He continues to lament Giorgetta's coldness, but at the same time, he begins to plan his revenge. He calls out to the unknown lover, inviting him to share his fate and descend with him into the depths of the river:

Dividi con me questa catena – Share these chains with me

Accumuna la tua con la mia sorte – Bind your fate with mine

Giù insiem nel gorgo più profondo – Together we'll go down into the deepest whirlpool

At the end of the aria, Michele carries out his revenge and kills the lover. He has crossed a moral boundary with an irreversible act.

Yet this act is not merely vengeance; it is also Michele's desperate attempt to reclaim his lost peace. He stands alone on the dark barge, in a night without hope, and cries out: “*La pace è nella morte*” – "Peace is in death".

Epilogue: On Michele and Cain

While pondering about Michele and his fatal decision, one cannot help but make the comparison with the biblical figure of **Cain** – the first person who must make a moral decision in the midst of a struggle of passion.

As we remember, the brothers Cain and Abel each brought an offering to God. Abel's offering was accepted favorably, but Cain's was not. Cain's jealousy burned within him, driving him to seek vengeance against his brother.

Against this backdrop, God addresses Cain and warns him:

"If you do well – shall you not be lifted up? But if you do not do well - sin crouches at the door, and its desire is for you, but you shall rule over it" (Genesis 4:7).

God explains to Cain the importance of choice, warns him against giving in to desire, and places the responsibility for his decision squarely upon him. The tolling of the bells in **Il tabarro** echoes this divine voice: they implore Michele to choose the righteous path. Like Cain, Michele stands before a grave moral decision, and his fate lies in his own hands.

But here a fundamental difference emerges: God's words to Cain are spoken with closeness and support. He begins with a positive outlook – **if you choose well, you will prevail**; He warns of sin, but ends with an expression of trust: **"you shall rule over it."**

That is, God not only cautions Cain – He also trusts him, guides him, and accompanies him.

Michele, in contrast, stands alone. The bells echo from afar, in warning and supplication, but no one is at his side; there is no voice to support or encourage him. Even the trumpet's call is not addressed to him, but proclaims his decision to all and warns of the Day of Judgment. **Michele is left utterly alone, bearing the full weight of responsibility and moral reckoning on his own shoulders.**



Elad Zabarman

Omer Arieli Musical Director, Conductor

Conducted the Sofia Philharmonic, the Dortmunder Philharmoniker, the American Symphony Orchestra, and most of the Israeli orchestras.

Worked as coach and conductor in many theatres and festivals in Austria, Germany, and Italy.

Winner of first prize in international competitions ("Belvedere" – Vienna, EAJC – Paris).

Lecturer at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, where he teaches various courses and leads the opera workshop.

Music Director and Conductor of the "Jerusalem Amateur Orchestra" and the "Jerusalem Oratorio Choir".



Daniel Lasry Stage Director

Holds a Bachelor's degree from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance and a Master's degree from the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp, Belgium. After completing her studies in Europe, she took part in several programs: a specialization in drama and opera at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Britain; a specialization in Italian Bel Canto at the Cherubini Conservatory of Music in Florence, Italy; and the Young Singers and Musicians' Program at the Royal Theatre of La Monnaie in Brussels, Belgium.

She studied and worked in Israel and abroad in various aspects of opera production, including directing and translation, in collaboration with different organizations, among them – the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and the Haifa Symphony Orchestra. This is her second production with the Jerusalem Opera as sole director, following **Il tabarro** (2022). In 2024, she co-directed **Madama Butterfly** with Gabriele Ribis.



Magdy Hawas

Florin Estefan **baritone**

Born in Romania, graduated from the “Gheorghe Dima” National Academy of Music in Cluj-Napoca and the Cardiff International Academy of Voice, where he studied with the renowned tenor Dennis O’Neill. In 2016 he gained the title of **Doctor of Music** from the “Gheorghe Dima” Academy of Music. His first operatic solo role was at the age of 20 with the Romanian National Opera in Cluj-Napoca, where he continues to appear until today. In 2016 he was awarded “**Best Male Singer of the Year**” at the Bucharest National Opera, for his interpretation of the title role in Eugene Onegin. In 2015 he was appointed the General Manager of the Romanian National Opera in Cluj-Napoca – becoming the youngest manager in its history. As General Manager, Florin has significantly increased young audiences’ participation in performances. This was achieved through a modern approach to audience engagement, and innovative projects, bringing opera into unconventional spaces with free access for everyone. Since 2017, Florin has been a faculty member at the “Gheorghe Dima” National Academy of Music in Cluj-Napoca, where he now holds the position of Associate Professor, PhD at the Voice Department. Florin has won numerous competitions and performed on stages both in Romania and abroad, such as the United Kingdom, Austria, Italy, Bulgaria, Australia, Japan and the United States. His roles include: the main roles in **Eugene Onegin** (P. I. Tchaikovsky) and **Rigoletto** (G. Verdi) and **Don Giovanni** (W. A. Mozart), **Amonasro** (*Aida*, G. Verdi), **Germont** (*La Traviata*, G. Verdi), **Count di Luna** (*Il Trovatore*, G. Verdi), **Michele** (*Il Tabarro*, G. Puccini), **Scarpia** (*Tosca*, G. Puccini), **Sharpless** (*Madama Butterfly*, G. Puccini), **Figaro** and **Count Almaviva** (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, W. A. Mozart), **Guglielmo** (*Così fan tutte*, W. A. Mozart), **Enrico** (*Lucia di Lammermoor*, G. Donizetti), **Belcore** (*L’Elisir d’Amore*, G. Donizetti) and others. His concert repertoire includes: Beethoven (Symphony No. 9), Requiem by Mozart and Fauré, C. Orff (*Carmina Burana*) and others.



Studio Line Berlin

Yasmine Levi-Ellentuck soprano

Born in Israel. Graduated from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance and the Brooklyn College Music Conservatory. She was also a member of the Opera Studio at the Israeli Opera and took part in the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv.

A prize winner of the Elizabeth Connell Competition in Sydney, Australia, and a recipient of the Wagner Society Award in New South Wales, she has also won prizes from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Competition in New York, the Gerda Lissner Foundation, the Giulio Gari Competition, and the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation in New York. She has received grants from the Ronen Foundation and Keren Sharet in Israel. Her operatic roles include the title role in **Madama Butterfly** (Puccini) with the Jerusalem Opera, *First Lady* in **The Magic Flute** (Mozart) at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, *Leonora* in **Il trovatore** (Verdi), *Fiordiligi* in **Così fan tutte**, *The Countess* in **The Marriage of Figaro** (Mozart) with the Jerusalem Opera, *Elettra* in **Idomeneo** (Mozart) with IVAI Tel Aviv, *Amelia* in **Un ballo in maschera** (Verdi), *Leonora* in **Fidelio** (Beethoven), *Ariadne* in **Ariadne auf Naxos** (Strauss), and *The Foreign Princess* in Dvořák's **Rusalka**.

With the Jerusalem Opera she has appeared in the following roles: *the Countess* in **The Marriage of Figaro** by Mozart, *Cio-Cio-San* in **Madama Butterfly**, and *Giorgetta* in **Il tabarro** by Puccini.

Her concert repertoire includes Beethoven's **Symphony No. 9**, Britten's **War Requiem**, Strauss's **Four Last Songs**, the soprano solo in Rossini's **Petite Messe solennelle**, Verdi's **Requiem** on tour in Germany, and *Jezebel* in the oratorio **Yoram** by Paul Ben-Haim at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig.



Ivan Defabiani Tenor

A lyric tenor, born in Italy in 1986. He studied with William Matteuzzi and graduated from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan.

His operatic debut was in Mascagni's *L'amico Fritz* alongside Leo Nucci, under the baton of Donato Renzetti. He was later selected by Riccardo Muti for the Italian Opera Academy, where he performed *Alfredo* in Verdi's *La Traviata* under Muti's direction. He also trained at the Soloists' Academy of Teatro alla Scala.

His notable roles include *Radamès* in *Aida*, *Macduff* in *Macbeth*, *Riccardo* in *Un ballo in maschera*, *Manrico* in *Il trovatore*, and *Ismaele* in *Nabucco*, all by Verdi, as well as *Pinkerton* in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. His international appearances include concerts in Moscow, Seoul, and Kazakhstan, as well as performances of *Pagliacci* and *Cavalleria rusticana* in Ljubljana.

He has also taught and given masterclasses at the Vincenzo Bellini Academy in Milan. This is his second appearance at the Jerusalem Opera, following his 2024 performance as *Pinkerton* in *Madama Butterfly*.



Noa Hope Sion mezzo soprano

Graduated from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. She has received prizes in various competitions and performs as a soloist in many productions and concerts all over Israel. Her repertoire includes *Baba* in Menotti's **The Medium**, *Rosina* in Rossini's **Il barbiere di Siviglia**, *Suzuki* in Puccini's **Madama Butterfly**, *La frugola* in **Il tabarro**, *Cherubino* in Mozart's **Le nozze di Figaro** and others. She performs in numerous productions of the Israeli Opera and the Jerusalem Opera. Among her roles with the Jerusalem Opera are: *Obaldo* in **Armida and Rinaldo** by G. Sarti, *La frugola* in **Il tabarro**, *Suzuki* in **Madame Butterfly** by Puccini and others.



Marc Shaimer tenor

Born in Russia, Marc Shaimer immigrated to Israel in 1990. For many years, he was a regular performer at the Israeli Opera, appearing both as a chorus member and as a soloist. He also performed many roles with various opera projects and orchestras, including the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, the Haifa Symphony Orchestra, and others.

His repertoire includes: *Il Duca* in Verdi's **Rigoletto**, *Rudolfo* in Puccini's **La Bohème**, *Tonio* in Donizetti's **La Fille du Régiment** and others. He has performed with the Jerusalem Opera in a variety of roles, including *Gastone* in Verdi's **La Traviata**, *Obaldo* in **Armida and Rinaldo** by Sarti, *Tinca* in **Il tabarro** and *the Goro* in **Madama Butterfly** by Puccini.



Lev Elgardt bass-baritone

Born in Russia and immigrated to Israel, he graduated from the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, the St. Petersburg Conservatory, and the Mariinsky Academy of Young Opera Singers. He won top prizes in international vocal competitions in Kiev (2004), Berlin (2008), and at the Rimsky-Korsakov Festival (2016), and has performed as a soloist with the Mariinsky Theatre.

His repertoire includes *the Water Goblin* in Dvorak's *Rusalka*; *Zuniga* in *Carmen* by Bizet; *Don Fernando* in *Fidelio* by Beethoven; *Masetto* in *Don Giovanni* by Mozart and others. With the Jerusalem Opera he has sung the role of *Talpa* in *Il tabarro* by Puccini, and the role of *Grivet* in *Thérèse Raquin* by Aharon Harlap.



Ron Zaika tenor

A student at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. He is a graduate of the Young Singers Program at the Jerusalem Music Centre, and a scholarship recipient of the Ronen Foundation and the America-Israel Cultural Foundation.

His roles include: *Tamino* in *The Magic Flute* in Hebrew, *Don Basilio* and *Don Curzio* in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Mozart). He has appeared as a soloist with the Ra'anana Symphonette Orchestra.

A chorus member in *Carmen* (Bizet) with Haifa Opera, and with the Israeli Opera Chorus in productions of *The Magic Flute* (Mozart), *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo), *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Offenbach), *Requiem* and *Rigoletto* (Verdi).



Sergei Bartenyev tenor

Began his studies in Omsk, Russia. After immigrating to Israel in 2022, he continued studying in the Vocal Department of the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. He has appeared as a soloist in Saint-Saëns' *Requiem*, as *Remendado* in Bizet's *Carmen*, and as *Tebaldo* in Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. He has taken part in numerous opera productions and recitals in Israel and abroad.



Angelina Tolstikova soprano

Born in Russia. Graduated from a Moscow music school in piano and classical singing. Currently, she is a student at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance.



Sireen Tarbosh soprano

A student at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance and a graduate of the Young Singers Program at the Jerusalem Music Centre. Recipient of the America-Israel Cultural Foundation scholarship (2022–2023). She performed the soprano solo in Brahms' *Requiem*, took part in productions with the Jerusalem and Israeli Opera, and conducts school choirs.



Ori Ahinoam bass-baritone

A versatile artist – trumpeter, composer, singer. Holds a degree in Interdisciplinary Composition and Music Education at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. Performs as a bass singer. In 2024, he won the Chaim Alexander Competition with the prize for “Best Work for Piano Trio”. He collaborates with leading musicians in Israel.



Ehoud Yaari bass

Ehoud appeared in *Madame Butterfly* and *Il tabarro* by Puccini, *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the Jerusalem Opera, as well as in various concerts in Israel with orchestras and choirs.

His teachers include Nili Harpaz, Jeff Francis and Omer Arieli.



Puccini's *Il Tabarro* with Luigi Montesanto as Michele, Claudia Muzio as Giorgetta, and Giulio Crimi as Luigi in premiere at New York Metropolitan, 1918. Photo: Blanco&Nero Studio