



THE
PRINCETON FESTIVAL



Puccini's

TOSCA

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Friday, June 13, 2025 – 7pm

Sunday, June 15, 2025 – 4pm

Tuesday, June 17, 2025 – 7pm

Friday, June 13, 2025 – 7pm
Sunday, June 15, 2025 – 4pm
Tuesday, June 17, 2025 – 7pm

The Princeton Festival
Performance Pavilion
Morven Museum & Garden

Puccini's TOSCA

Music by Giacomo Puccini
Italian libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa
Reduced version edited by Frédéric Chaslin
Sung in Italian with English titles.

Rossen Milanov, Conductor
Eve Summer, Stage Director
Ryan McGettigan, Scenic Designer
Marie Miller, Costume Designer
Paul Kilsdonk, Lighting Designer
Carissa Thorlakson, Wig and Makeup Designer
Cassie Goldbach, Production Stage Manager
Ian Rose, Fight Director
Tomás Garcia, Supertitle Operator
Danielle Orlando, Répétiteur/Coach
Vinroy D. Brown, Chorus preparation
Allison Fay, Childrens' chorus director

CAST

Toni Marie Palmertree, Tosca
Victor Starsky, Cavaradossi
Luis Ledesma, Scarpia
Eric Delagrange, Cesare Angelotti
Stefano de Peppo, A Sacristan
Nicholas Nestorak, Spoletta
Jacob Hanes, Sciarrone/Jailer
Aubry Ballarò, Sheperd Boy
and
Princeton Festival Opera Chorus

These performances are made possible in part through major gifts from:

Yvonne Marcuse
Sarah Ringer
Anonymous

and significant supporting gifts from:

Samuel M. Hamill, Jr.
Jay Vawter

Toni Marie Palmertree's appearance is made possible with support from Princeton Friends of Opera.

Large print programs and assistive listening devices are available. No audio or video recording or photography is permitted. Dates, times, artists, and programs are subject to change.



Made possible by funds from the
New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner
agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.



SYNOPSIS

Act I

The Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle

Escaped political prisoner Cesare Angelotti, finds refuge in a chapel in the church. His friend, the painter Mario Cavaradossi, discovers him and offers to help. Cavaradossi's lover, the famous opera singer Flora Tosca, interrupts their planning. Prone to jealousy, Tosca suspects Cavaradossi of being unfaithful but he manages to calm her and they arrange to meet later that evening. Cavaradossi and Angelotti flee just before the arrival of the police chief Baron Scarpia. He discovers evidence that Angelotti was hiding in the church and suspects Cavaradossi was an accomplice in his escape. When Tosca returns, Scarpia uses the evidence to feed her jealousy and convinces her that Cavaradossi has fled with another woman. She leaves to find Cavaradossi and confront him. Scarpia exults that he now has Tosca in his power.

INTERMISSION

Act II

Scarpia's rooms in the Palazzo Farnese

Scarpia anticipates his next meeting with Tosca. Cavaradossi has been arrested and brought to Scarpia but refuses to divulge Angelotti's whereabouts. When Tosca enters the painter is taken to be interrogated while Scarpia tries to extract information from her. When Cavaradossi cries out in pain as he is tortured, she reveals where Angelotti is hidden. Cavaradossi remains defiant as he is taken to prison to be executed. Tosca pleads for her lover's life, but Scarpia answers that only by giving herself to him can she save Cavaradossi. She agrees and Scarpia arranges for the mock execution of Cavaradossi. Thinking that he will now have her, Scarpia approaches Tosca, only to be stabbed to death.

INTERMISSION

Act III

The parapet of the Castel Sant'Angelo

The voice of a shepherd is heard as church bells signal dawn. Cavaradossi awaits execution. He bribes the jailer to allow him to write a final note to Tosca. As he writes he is flooded with memories. Tosca hurriedly enters and explains that she has killed

Scarpia. She tells Cavaradossi about the mock execution and the two sing of their future life together. Cavaradossi is shot by the firing squad. After they leave Tosca approaches his body, but realizes that he is dead. When the men arrive to arrest her for Scarpia's murder, Tosca leaps from the parapet crying out that she will meet Scarpia in God's presence.

World premiere at the Teatro Costanzi, Rome, January 14, 1900.

—Sarasota Opera
Used with permission.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Rossen Milanov, conductor
Edward T. Cone Music Director

Rossen Milanov looks forward to collaborating in 2025-26 with established and emerging artists of the orchestral world and helming the Princeton Symphony Orchestra's popular June performing arts celebration – The Princeton Festival.

Respected and admired by audiences and musicians alike, he has established himself as a conductor with considerable national and international presence. In addition to leading the PSO, Mr. Milanov is the music director of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra and the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra.

During his eleven-year tenure with The Philadelphia Orchestra, he conducted more than 200 performances. In 2015, he completed a 15-year tenure as music director of the nationally recognized training orchestra Symphony in C in New Jersey and in 2013, a 17-year tenure with the New Symphony Orchestra in his native city of Sofia, Bulgaria. Mr. Milanov has collaborated with Komische Oper Berlin (Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtzensk*), Opera Oviedo with the Spanish premiere of Tchaikovsky's *Mazepa* and Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* (awarded best Spanish production for 2015), and Opera Columbus (Verdi's *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto* and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*). He has been seen at New York City Ballet and collaborated with some of the best-known choreographers of our time such as Mats Ek, Benjamin Millepied, and most recently Alexei Ratmansky in the critically acclaimed revival of *Swan Lake* in Zurich with Zurich Ballet and in Paris with La Scala Ballet.

Mr. Milanov is deeply committed to music education, presenting Link Up education projects with Carnegie Hall and the Orchestra of St. Luke's and leading the PSO's annual BRAVO! concerts for thousands of school children. He was named Bulgaria's Musician of the Year in 2005; he won a 2011 ASCAP award for adventurous

programming of contemporary music at the PSO; and he was selected as one of the top 100 most influential people in New Jersey in 2014. In 2017, he was recipient of a Columbus Performing Arts Prize awarded by The Columbus Foundation. He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School.

rossenmilanov.com

Photo by Stephen Pariser



Soprano **TONI MARIE PALMERTREE** (*Tosca*) is rapidly becoming recognized as one of America's most riveting performers of Puccini and Verdi heroines. She has been heard on the stage of San Francisco Opera in the title role of *Madama Butterfly*; of her performance, *San Francisco Classical Voice* published: "The young soprano not only met the challenge, but she claimed her place among the finest vocal interpreters of the role heard here recently." In the current season, Ms. Palmertree returns to San Francisco Opera and The Metropolitan Opera, performs the title role of *Tosca* with the Princeton Symphony Orchestra, and sings Mimi in *La bohème* for OperaDelaware and Opera Baltimore. At the Metropolitan Opera, she performed the role of Voce dal ciel and covered the role of Elisabeth de Valois in Verdi's *Don Carlo*, and covered the title role of Cherubini's *Medea*. Further recent performances include Contessa Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with OperaDelaware.



Tenor **VICTOR STARSKY** (Cavaradossi), a native of Richmond Hill, New York, received critical acclaim this year for his performances as Don José in Sarasota Opera's production of Bizet's *Carmen*, as well as his role debuts with New York City Opera as Mario Cavaradossi in Puccini's *Tosca* and Maurizio in Pittsburgh Festival Opera's production of Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur*. Starsky made his debut as Nemorino with Charlottesville Opera in their production of Donizetti's *L'Elisir D'Amore*. Starsky performed the role of Jim Casy in MasterVoice's Carnegie Hall presentation of Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Grapes of Wrath*. Of Starsky's Don José, *The Observer* writes "While possessing a voice that flexes with nuance, the genius of Starsky's stage performance is how he shares each tiny tear in his moral fabric as he follows and succumbs to Carmen despite every effort to cling to what he knows is moral and right. Watching his slow crumbling into unhinged desperation is unforgettable." Starsky looks forward to returning to Sarasota Opera as the tenor soloist in their Fall Season concert, *The Music of Giuseppe Verdi*, and in the title role in Verdi's *Stiffelio* in Winter 2025.

Photo by Visual Victory Studios



Baritone **LUIS LEDESMA** (Scarpia) frequently portrays the heroes and villains of Puccini, Verdi, and the bel canto masters, as well as roles in recent new works in Spanish including *Florencia en el Amazonas* and *El pasado nunca se termina*, which featured débuts with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, San Diego Opera, and a return to New York City Opera. Recent engagements include Scarpia in *Tosca* for Opera Colorado, *Gianni Schicchi* for On Site Opera, the Payador in *Maria de Buenos Aires* with Kentucky Opera, Tonio in *Pagliacci* with Sacramento Symphony, and in concert with the Toledo Symphony. Last season, Mr. Ledesma sang *Rigoletto* for Portland Opera in the Park, and in concert with Opera Omaha and South Florida Symphony for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. This season, he joins Portland Opera in the Park and Opera Western Reserve to sing Germont in *La traviata*, as well as Princeton Symphony Orchestra to sing Scarpia in *Tosca*.

Photo by Paul Sirochman



ERIC DELAGRANGE (Cesare Angelotti) is a highly regarded American bass, celebrated for his powerful vocal presence and impressive stage performances. A distinguished graduate of the prestigious Academy of Vocal Arts, he has garnered critical acclaim, with *Opera News* describing him as "a truly excellent bass" and *Parterre* highlighting his "commanding and powerful voice." In the 2024-2025 season, Delagrange will showcase his versatility with several notable role debuts. He will take on the role of Angelotti in *Tosca* with The Princeton Festival, make his house debut as Superintendent Budd in *Albert Herring* with Opera Baltimore, debut as William Jennings Bryan in *The Ballad of Baby Doe* with Western Plains Opera, and portray the Commedatore in *Don Giovanni* as a guest artist with Temple University. Past performances include notable roles such as Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* with Ópera Nacional de Chile, Pistola in *Falstaff* and the Imperial Commissioner in *Madama Butterfly* with Palm Beach Opera, Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with The Princeton Festival, Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette* with Opera San José, the Hermit in *Der Freischütz* with Heartbeat Opera, and Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* with the Music Academy of the West.

Photo by Gillian Reisen

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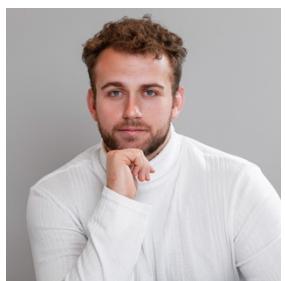


STEFANO DE PEPPO (Sacristan) made his debut as a bass-baritone at Bellas Artes Opera House in 1990. Leporello (Don Giovanni), Figaro (Le nozze di Figaro), Don Magnifico (La Cenerentola), Bartolo (Il Barbiere di Siviglia), Publio (La Clemenza di Tito) were some of his early roles. In 2002 he sang Leporello in Rome with Renato Bruson as don Giovanni in a production televised by RAI and released into a commercial DVD. After auditioning for Placido Domingo, he sang Betto (Gianni Schicchi)

at Los Angeles Opera and at Washington Opera (with Samuel Ramey as Schicchi). He was Bartolo in Kansas with the delightful Rosina of Joyce DiDonato. He has sung the title role of *Don Giovanni* with Mozart Festival Opera, and the role of Barone Kelbar in Verdi's *Un giorno di regno* at Sarasota Opera. In 2021/2022 he was Uberto (La serva padrona) and Gaudenzio (Il signor Bruschino) at Sarasota Opera, don Magnifico (La Cenerentola) at Nashville Opera, the Sacristan (Tosca) at Opera Colorado and at Sarasota Opera, and again at Sarasota Opera he was Geronimo (Il matrimonio segreto) and Leporello (Don Giovanni) during the 2022/2023 season. He took part in the new opera *Tenor overboard* by Ken Ludwig/Gioachino Rossini which premiered at Glimmerglass Festival, where he returned in *La Boheme* and *Romeo et Juliet*.



NICHOLAS NESTORAK (Spoletta) is a tenor on the rise since joining the Metropolitan Opera roster in 2021 and making his highly anticipated Met début last season as Pang in their lavish production of *Turandot*. Also at The Met, he has covered Pang, Tanzmeister in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and Bardolfo in *Falstaff*. He will return to The Met this season to cover Spoletta in *Tosca*. Last season's engagements also included Pedrillo in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* with Opera Grand Rapids, Prunier in *La rondine* with Opera on the James, Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with Opera San Antonio, and Pang with Opera Delaware. This season, Nestorak will join the Princeton Symphony Orchestra's Princeton Festival to sing Spoletta in *Tosca*.



Baritone **JACOB STAFFORD HANES** is a graduate of DePaul University where he earned his MM in Vocal Performance. He is also an alumni of the prestigious Castleton Festival Vocal Immersion Program, working under Paul Groves and Michelle DeYoung. He is currently a Resident Artist at the Academy of Vocal Arts (AVA). In 2023-24, he was featured in the roles of Frank Maurant in Weill's *Street Scene*, Prophet/King in Muhly's *Dark Sisters* with DePaul Opera Theatre, and W.P. Inman in Higdon's *Cold Mountain* at the Seagle Festival, where he also workshopped Evan Mack and Evan Campbell's monodrama for baritone *American Sputnik*, singing the role of Van Cliburn. At AVA, Hanes performed as Valentin in *Faust* and Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*. This season, he is making his Princeton Festival debut as Sciarrone in *Tosca*.

PRODUCTION TEAM



Described as having “a gift for translating classic symbolism into familiar detail” with work that is “transfixingly personal,” **EVE SUMMER**’s recent directing credits include *Ariodante* (Boston Baroque), *Trouble in Tahiti* (The Glimmerglass Festival), *Rigoletto*, *Tosca*, *Don Giovanni* (Opera Columbus), *Così fan tutte*, *Les Mamelles de Tirésias/The Seven Deadly Sins*, *Albert Herring* (The Curtis Institute), *The Barber of Seville* (Opera Saratoga), *The Little Prince* (Tulsa Opera), *Don Giovanni* (Opera Carolina), and *L’elisir d’amore*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Mikado*, *Le docteur Miracle*, *Così fan tutte* (Opera Grand Rapids). Acclaimed for her “approach [which] refreshes hope for the future of opera” additional recent credits include: *The Pearl Fishers* (Opera Tampa and Opera in Williamsburg), *La Traviata* (Annapolis Opera), *The Tales of Hoffmann* (Opera Orlando and Opera in Williamsburg), *La donna del lago* (Resonance Works), *Xerxes* (Connecticut Early Music Festival), *La clemenza di Tito*, *Little Women* (Boston University Opera Institute), and *Le nozze di Figaro* (Knoxville Opera).



RYAN MCGETTIGAN is a scenic designer for theatre, opera, and dance. He is the resident designer at Cape Rep Theatre in Brewster, MA and has been a company artist with Prague Shakespeare Company and the Classical Theatre Company. Houston: TUTS, Stages Repertory, Catastrophic, Main Street Theater, A.D. Players, 4th Wall Theatre Com. Awards for Best Scenic Design from Houston Press in 2015, 2019, and 2020. Regional: 100a Productions (San Antonio), Orlando Shakespeare Theater, Cape Rep, Abilene Shakespeare Festival, Prague Shakespeare. Opera and Dance: Glimmerglass Festival, Florentine Opera, New Orleans Opera, Opera San Antonio, Opera San Jose, HGoco, Rice’s Shepherd School and Moody Center for the Arts, Asia Society in collaboration with Houston Ballet, Open Dance Project. www.RyanMcGettigan.com



As resident costumer **MARIE MILLER** has kept the Princeton Festival in stitches since its inception in 2005, including the design for last season’s *Cosi Fan Tutti*. Other opera-tunities include 10 years with the Opera Festival of NJ, Curtis Institute of Music, and Princeton University opera theater. Among her favorite fabrications: *The Boys Next Door* (McCarter world premiere) and the creation/construction of the 90-ft. long “70-pede” for the Princeton University Alumni P-rade. When pressed, she admits many years of theater both in Washington DC and the Princeton area, including over 20

years as Costume Curator at McCarter, George St. Playhouse, and for the free outdoor Shakespeare performances of Princeton Rep.



PAUL KILSDONK (Lighting Design) is excited to return to Princeton Festival for another fantastic summer season. The Princeton Festival – *Cosi Fan Tutti*, *Barber of Seville*, *Harvey Milk*, *Albert Herring*, *The Impresario*, *Scalia/Ginsburg*, and a variety of music events at Morven Museum and Garden. Paul has also designed many productions with Passage Theater, including *White Guy on the Bus*, *Song for the Disappeared*, and *The Goldilocks Zone*. He designed lighting for *The Language Archive* with Bristol Riverside Theatre and *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* at Langhorne Players. Design for McCarter Theatre includes *The Tony Morrison Project*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Eclipsed*, *Coming Home*, and *Lucky Girl*. In his staff position as Lighting Supervisor with McCarter Theatre, Paul has been responsible for creating the lighting for hundreds of events, including soloist musicians, jazz trios, rock bands, orchestras, and festive lighting for the annual galas.



CARISSA THORLAKSON is a New Jersey-based wig and makeup designer. She has created designs for Off-Broadway productions of *Grand Hotel* and *Little Rock*. She has also designed for The Old Globe, A.R.T., Walnut Street Theatre, McCarter Theatre Center, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Hudson Stage Company, Temple University, Olney Theatre Center, the University of Delaware Resident Ensemble Players, The Princeton Festival, and American Repertory Ballet. She has served as a wig and makeup artist at Santa Fe Opera, Sarasota Opera, Washington National Opera at The Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Signature Theatre, and Round House Theatre.



CASSIE GOLDBACH is a stage manager specializing in music-driven performance. Tours: Blue Man Group's *How to Be A Megastar Tour*, *STOMP!*, Mannheim Steamroller, Apollo's Fire Baroque Orchestra, Donny & Marie Osmond, Tape Face, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*, *Live!*, *The Clairvoyants*, *A Nat King Cole Christmas*, *The Male Intellect: An Oxymoron*, and countertenor Phillip Jaroussky. International & National: Teatro Signorelli (Italy), Icastica Arezzo (Italy), Casino Lisboa (Portugal), New World Stages (NYC), Town Hall (NYC), Pershing Signature Center (NYC), Barrow Street Theater (NYC), Artist Lounge Live (Chicago), Columbus Symphony, Cleveland Opera Theatre, Broadway in Chicago, Opera Per Tutti. She currently holds production & stage management residencies with Cleveland Institute of Music Opera Theater and the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival.



DANIELLE ORLANDO is an accompanist to international opera singers and a vocal coach and artistic consultant to prestigious musical organizations throughout the world. She is a master coach for the Academy of Vocal Arts and served as the Director of the Curtis Opera Theatre. Ms. Orlando has worked with such great artists as Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, Gian Carlo Menotti, Riccardo Muti, and Yannick Nezet-Seguin. She has held positions in Opera Philadelphia, the Metropolitan Opera, Washington

National Opera, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Dresden Semperoper, and Savolinna Opera Festival. She presents master classes and coachings around the world, including the US, Europe, Mexico, and China.

PRINCETON FESTIVAL OPERA CHORUS

Vinroy Brown, Chorus preparation

Allison Fay, Childrens' chorus director

Abdon Andahur

Peggy Bayer-Waldron

Victoria Borrelli

Silky M. Carter

Olivia Dixon

Angel Gardner

Sarah Giampietro

James Harris

Lucas Heredia

Melissa Ketner

Tyler Kriney

Paige Liloia

Jiarui Mau

Clara Melvin

Ongama Mhontlo

Timothy Morrow

Kat Rich

Malcolm Richardson

Douglas Rowland

Rebecca Shimer

Sarah Stevenson

Royce Strider

John Velez

Siyuan Yin

Childrens Chorus

Benjamin "Benny" Breaux

Tyler Chen

Carola Luis de Torres

Dalia Domini

Jonah Galayda

Levi Galayda

Clementine Nieman

Luciana Velez

Harry Fini (supernumerary)

Michael Paluszek (supernumerary/Roberti)

Rossen Milanov, Edward T. Cone Music Director, ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY
Kenneth Bean, Georg and Joyce Albers-Schonberg Assistant Conductor, ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY
June 6-21, 2025

VIOLIN I

Basia Danilow ² / Ruotao Mao ¹
/ Emma Meinrenken ³ /
Michael Roth ⁴ / Claire Bourg ⁵
Concertmaster
The George W. Pitcher Chair,
ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY
Giancarlo Latta
The Yvonne Marcuse Chair,
in memory of Mark M. Rutzky
Margaret Banks
Linda Howard
Tara A. Pagano-Toub
Sam Parrini
Cheng-Chih Kevin Tsai

VIOLIN II

Cameron Chase ¹ / Emma
Richman ^{2,3,4,5}
The B. Sue Howard Chair
Michelle Brazier
Fengwan Chen
Abigail Hong
Arthur Moeller
Cheng-Hsun David Tsai

VIOLA

Stephanie Griffin ⁴ / Chieh-Fan
Yiu ^{1,2,3} / Maurycy Banaszek ⁵
The Harriet & Jay Vawter Chair
Hannah Burnett
Beth Meyers
Jacqueline Watson
Cameren Anai Williams

CELLO

Branson Yeast¹ /
Ari Evan ² /
Joseph Staten ³ /
Frankie Carr ⁴ /
Maja Bogdanović ⁵
The Julian Grant & Peter Light Family Chair
Iona Batchelder
Elizabeth Loughran
Nicco Mazziotto
Elizabeth Thompson

BASS

John Grillo
The Stephanie & Robert Wedeking Chair

Stephen Groat
Dan Hudson

FLUTE

Sooyun Kim ^{1,2} /
Brendan Dooley ³ /
Megan Carroll ⁴
The Lunder/Ezekowitz Family Chair

Olivia Chaikin
Hilary Jones

OBOE

Lillian Copeland ⁴ /
Gilles Cheng ¹ /
Kemp Jernigan ² /
Erin Gustafson ³
The Cynthia & Rob Hillas Chair

Matthew Maroon

CLARINET

Pascal Archer
The Richard J. & Neil Ann S. Levine Chair
Gi Lee

BASSOON

Marty Tung ¹ /
Adrian Morejon ² /
Jensen Bocco ³
The Cynthia & Rob Hillas Chair

Zach Feingold

SAXOPHONE

Todd Groves, alto
Greg Thymius, tenor
John DiSanto, baritone

HORN

Steven Harmon
The Dr. Michael L. Barnett Chair
Colin Weyman
Jonathan Clark

TRUMPET

Jerry Bryant
The Donna & Donald Deieso Chair
Tom Cook

TROMBONE

Connor Rowe
The David A. Tierno Chair
Lars Wendt
The Lor & Michael Gehret Chair
James Rogers

TUBA

Jonathan Fowler

TIMPANI

Jeremy Levine
The Anne VanLent Chair

PERCUSSION

Phyllis Bitow
The Lunder/Ezekowitz Family Chair
Greg Giannascoli
Jared Soldiviero

DRUMSET

Joe Choroszewski ¹ /
Eric Borghi ²

HARP

André Tarantiles ^{2,3,4} /
Jacqueline Kerrod ⁵
Anonymous Chair, given by a PSO friend in honor of all parents

KEYBOARD

Tom Cuffari ^{1,2}
Cyrus von Hochstetter ³
Hanbyeol Lee ⁵

ELECTRIC GUITAR

Jack Cavari ¹

BANJO

Beth Meyers ²

ELECTRIC BASS

Jeffrey Carney ¹ /
Stephen Groat ²

KEY:

1. ICON
2. Renee Fleming
3. Tosca
4. Ballet
5. Viva Vivaldi

