

ROSALIND ELIAS

LAURENT PELLY

AILYN PÉREZ

LUCA PISARONI

RAMÓN VARGAS

# OPERA NEWS

THE CULT OF  
WAGNER'S RING

BY CHARLES SHAFAlEH  
p.36

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**OPERA NEWS**  
*AWARDS*



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# OPERA NEWS

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COVER

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## FEATURES

### 22 Opera News Awards

• **RAMÓN VARGAS**

*By Louise T. Guinther*

*Portrait by Coral von Zumwalt*

• **AILYN PÉREZ**

*By Henry Stewart*

*Portrait by Dario Acosta*

• **LUCA PISARONI**

*By Adam Wasserman*

*Portrait by Anthony Tahlier*

• **LAURENT PELLY**

*By Eloise Giegerich*

• **ROSALIND ELIAS**

*By F. Paul Driscoll*

### 36 Serial Monogamy

Why are **WAGNER FANS** so passionate about the *Ring*?

*By Charles Shafaieh*

*Illustrations by*

*Robert Neubecker*

### 40 Beauty Awakened

New York's love affair with **MARGOT FONTEYN** began at the Met.

*By Alastair Macaulay*

See OPERA NEWS Award honoree Ramón Vargas in conversation on April 9. Visit [OPERANEWS.COM/SINGERSSTUDIO](http://OPERANEWS.COM/SINGERSSTUDIO) for details.

// LAURENT PELLY //

// LUCA PISARONI //

// ROSALIND ELIAS //



THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL  
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*AWARDS*

// AILYN PÉREZ //

// RAMÓN VARGAS //



—  
Mélange brown  
and beige  
cashmere  
soft jacket  
by Via Luca;  
wool silk sweater  
by Via Luca



# Luca Pisaroni

**LUCA PISARONI'S** musical and dramatic commitment reshapes every opera in which he sings. When the bass-baritone took on the role of Leporello in Michael Grandage's then-new production of *Don Giovanni* at the Met in 2011, Pisaroni's catalogue aria stood the entire opera on its head: watching his Leporello engage Elvira was a bit like witnessing Anthony Hopkins's Hannibal Lecter torment Jodie Foster from behind a glass screen. The gorgeous malice with which he intoned the phrase "Voi sapete quel che fa" came

across as the apogee of the psychological violence on display that evening.

Pisaroni's two-decade career has been crowded with breathtaking moments that have arrived by way of sidestepping the predictable. Instead of merely projecting brawn, the virtuoso rage of his rendition of "Sibillar gli angui d'Aletto," from Glyndebourne's *Rinaldo*, left his desperate Argante on the verge of mental collapse. His urbane version of "Là del ciel nell'arcano profondo," as Alidoro in 2014 Met performances of *Cenerentola*, worked not by divine will

but by something closer to paternal common sense.

The bass-baritone has not merely built his repertoire around a nucleus of Mozart roles; he has exploded the presumptions of what these thrice-familiar characters can convey. The blue-blooded imperiousness that defined Pisaroni's take on Count Almaviva during 2017 Met *Figaro* performances seemed worlds away from the forthright title character that got hitched in his splendid 2015 recording of Mozart's opera. Yet the elegance at the center of Pisaroni's vocal approach to

roles is more than the work of a supreme Mozartean: it reveals a singing actor's shrewd grasp of the parallels between an upstart valet's nobility of spirit and a dangerous aristocrat oblivious to the limits of reason. The bass-baritone's interpretations attest that Mozart's characters aren't way stations en route to more dramatic roles but destinations in themselves. It's fitting that Pisaroni was tapped to sing Lorenzo da Ponte in this month's HGO world premiere of *The Phoenix*: it's hard to recall another singer

// CONTINUED ON PAGE 34 //



Alidoro to Joyce DiDonato's Angelina in the Met's *Cenerentola*, 2014



Méphistophélès in *Faust* at Houston Grand Opera, 2016

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