



SEAN PANIKKAR, Tenor

Sean Panikkar continues to “position himself as one of the stars of his generation... His voice is unassailable—firm, sturdy and clear, and he employs it with maximum dramatic versatility” [*Opera News*]. The tenor is lauded by both the public and press for his impressive vocal agility, impeccable musicianship, and a keen dramatic sense throughout a broad range of principal roles on leading international operatic stages.

Highlights of the 2026-27 season include returns to the Metropolitan Opera bowing as Steva in Claus Guth’s new setting of Janáček’s *Jenůfa* led by Tomáš Hanus, to the Wiener Staatsoper for a role debut as Alwa in *Lulu* conducted by Simone Young, and to the Bayerische Staatsoper as Loge reprising his acclaimed portrayal in Tobias Kratzer’s vivid realization of *Das Rheingold* under the baton of Vladimir Jurowski. The American tenor makes his debut at the Opéra national de Paris as Boris in *Katya Kabanova* led by Simone Young in a revival production by Christoph Marthaler, and in a new production by Krzysztof Warlikowski of *Fidelio* at the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden with Joana Mallwitz conducting the Mahler Chamber Orchestra.

Four significant role debuts were the highlight of Sean Panikkar’s 2025-26 season and firmly demonstrated the tenor’s standing as one of the most compelling international stars of his generation: Albert Gregor in Janáček’s *The Makropulos Case* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in a new production by Katie Mitchell led by Jakub Hrůša; Sergei in a new Barrie Kosky production of Shostakovich’s *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* at Komische Oper Berlin conducted by James Gaffigan; Jeník in Smetana’s *The Bartered Bride* in a new production at the Teatro Real staged by Laurent Pelly under the baton of Gustavo Gimeno; and Le Lépreux in Messiaen’s monumental masterpiece, *Saint François d’Assise*, in a new production by Romeo Castelucci conducted by Maxime Pascal.

On international stages, Sean Panikkar has been acclaimed in a role debut as Peter Grimes at Opéra national de Lyon, in the Christof Loy milestone realization of Britten’s masterpiece, for which he was noted as a “revelation” (*Classique News*) and “literally breathtaking” (*Diapason*). The tenor made his continental debut as The Bridegroom in the Australian premiere of Kaija Saariaho and Sofi Oksanen’s gripping drama *Innocence* at the Adelaide Festival, directed by Simon Stone and conducted by Clément Mao-Takacs. He also has sung the role of Gandhi in Philip Glass’s *Satyagraha*, directed by Phelim McDermott, at Los Angeles Opera and English National Opera.

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Highly prized as an interpreter of contemporary opera, the American tenor of Sri Lankan heritage achieved a breakout success in his 2018 Salzburger Festspiele debut as Dionysus in a new production of Henze's *The Bassarids*, directed by Krzysztof Warlikowski under the baton of Kent Nagano. He has since returned to Salzburg in new productions of Nono's *Intolleranza 1960* with the creative team of Jan Lauwers and Ingo Metzmacher, and made a role debut as Alexej Iwanowitsch in a new production by Peter Sellars of Prokofiev's *The Gambler*, led by Timur Zangiev. Loge in *Das Rheingold* features prominently in the diary having bowed in new productions at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden directed by Barrie Kosky led by Music Director Sir Antonio Pappano and at the Bayerische Staatsoper directed by Tobias Kratzer conducted by Music Director Vladimir Jurowski.

Sean Panikkar made his Bayerische Staatsoper debut as Laertes in Brett Dean's *Hamlet* in the company's new production by Neil Armfield conducted by Vladimir Jurowski and his Wiener Staatsoper debut in a new production of *Wozzeck* directed by Simon Stone under the baton of Music Director Philippe Jordan. He created the role of Adam in the world premiere of Giorgio Battistelli's *CO2* for a debut at Teatro alla Scala conducted by Cornelius Meister and directed by Robert Carsen. Panikkar bowed at the Komische Oper Berlin in *The Bassarids* in a new production directed by Barrie Kosky under the baton of Vladimir Jurowski.

Metropolitan Opera highlights outline a dynamic array of works including *The Hours*, *Guillaume Tell*, *The Death of Klinghoffer*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Roméo et Juliette*, and *Manon Lescaut*.

The tenor achieved critical success as Don José in the Calixto Bieito production of *Carmen*, which he has sung many times at English National Opera, and further highlights of an eminent diary include the title role of *Œdipus Rex* in a new production for Dutch National Opera, at the San Francisco Symphony in a production by Peter Sellars conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen, and with Juraj Valčuha leading the Houston Symphony. At the Festival d'Aix en Provence he has bowed in Mozart's *Zaïde* conducted by Louis Langrée and in Weill's *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* directed by Ivo van Hove and led by Esa-Pekka Salonen.

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Equally at home on the symphonic stage, recent highlights of a dynamic concert schedule include Tippet's *A Child of Our Time* paired with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Sir Antonio Pappano leading the London Symphony Orchestra, Bruckner's *Te Deum* with both Xian Zhang and the New Jersey Symphony as well as with Yannick Nézet-Séguin and the Philadelphia Orchestra, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg and conductor Duncan Ward in a *mise-en-espace* by the Samoan Director/Choreographer Lemi Ponifasio - also performed with the Britten Sinfonia at the Barbican Centre - and Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings* with Jayce Ogren and the Monterey Symphony.

Sean Panikkar is a member of Forte, the operatic tenor group combining voices from different cultures into one incredible sound. The trio was created and debuted on *America's Got Talent* having never met until only days before their first audition. During the 2013 season of the popular variety show Forte was seen and heard by tens of millions of television viewers in national broadcasts on NBC. Their self-titled debut recording on Columbia Records was released in November 2013 and a follow-up recording, *The Future Classics*, was released in 2015.

An alumnus of San Francisco Opera's Adler Fellowship, Sean Panikkar holds his Bachelor and Master degrees in Voice Performance from the University of Michigan.

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