The SE-NW diagonal contains METAMORPHOSEN and letters in the grid spell out the titles of operas SALOME, DAPHNE and GUNTRAM (shown in red). All are works by RICHARD STRAUSS. JOHANN (starting in 7d) and the possible DIEFLE(D)ERMAUS in the SW-NE diagonal are red herrings.

Clue Notes

Removed words shown on the right.

ACROSS

2 MUDRA MUD+R+A
8S CIRCUS CIRCLE with US for LE agents
13A AERIE 2 defs haunts
14 LIENAL LIEN+A+L
16 VISNES VIS+SEN<
17 ATMANS A+T+MAN+'S
19M RHEMIST R+[H+TIMES]* Company
20E HINDHEAD H+IN+D+HEAD west
22A OLEA O+LEA fading
24H HEARKEN HE+AR+KEN mighty

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Across</th>
<th>Down</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25N</td>
<td>LANOSE L+A+NOSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27E</td>
<td>MESONS [SOME]*+NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>ANNULET {LUNN in (S)TEA(K)}&lt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>MATT MATT(ER)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>NEEMTREE [METER]* in (N+EE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>GEMFISH GEM+(IS in HF&lt;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>A+NEATH A+NEATH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41T</td>
<td>AUNTIE A+UNTIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>ACATES ACE'S around AT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>TOTES TO+T(H)E+S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>DURESS DRESS around U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>PHASE PH(R)ASE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DOWN

1  NAVAHO (A+VA+H(EARD) in NO |
3  URSINE URINE around S |
4  DINO DO around IN |
5  REECHES R+[CHEESE]* |
6O  ALSO (A+SO) around L | Tory |
7  HIJRAH H+I+JR+A+(FINIS)H |
9  INTER (P)INTER |
10 RAMMERS RS around (D)AMMER |
11L CLAIM (LA in CI) +M | Logged |
12 SESTONS [STONES]*+S(ETTLE) |
15 UNSCENTED U+NS+[DECENT]* |
18G LILANGENI LI+[LEANING]* | Doughty |
21D DEMO DEMO(N) | data |
23P PEEN PEE+N | patio |
25R LAGGARD (AG+GAR) in (L+D) | Frozen |
26 OUTFACE (UT+F) in (O+ACE) |
28U EXMOUTH EX+MOTH around U | using |
30 TEHEES (PEAC)E in [THESE]* |
32 ARETTTS (ARE+S) around TT |
33M TELESM (TELE+M) around S | room |
34A SMEAR M in SEAR | boat |
35 LITAS LIT+AS |
38 WASP WAS+P |
39N ANOA (ON+A)<+A | hunter |