

Barbara Kozelj

mezzo-soprano

Slovenian mezzo-soprano Barbara Kozelj has established herself as a charismatic and versatile soloist and musician. Following her debut with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in 2013, her career has taken flight. A Carnegie Hall debut the year after in Bach's *Matthäus-Passion* with Iván Fischer received critical acclaim from both press and public.

In 2015 she received critical acclaim for her role debut as Penelope in Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* with the Academy of Ancient Music and Richard Egarr in London's Barbican hall, next to Ian Bostridge as Ulisse.

Barbara regularly performs with Iván Fischer and his Budapest Festival Orchestra. This summer she made her BBC Proms debut as the alto soloist in Mozart's Requiem and joined the orchestra on a European tour featuring performances in Budapest, Amsterdam, London, Bruges, Baden-Baden, Berlin and San Sebastian. A CD recording of the Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will be released shortly on the Channel Classics label.

She is in great demand as a concert soloist and has distinguished herself in leading opera roles as Ruggiero, Cyrus, Galatea and Juno (Händel), Orfeo (Gluck), Donna Elvira and Dorabella (Mozart), Flosshilde (Wagner), Lucretia (Britten), Nérís (Cherubini), performing in opera houses of Essen, Bonn and Amsterdam, and with young opera companies such as Opera2day and The Ministry of Operatic Affairs.

In concert she has given critically acclaimed performances of Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and *Kindertotenlieder*, Ravel's *Shéhérazade*, Elgar's *Sea pictures*, Berlioz' *Les Nuits d'été*, Verdi's and Duruflé's Requiem, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solenne* and has established herself in oratorio repertoire of Händel and Bach.

Composers of this time are writing especially for her. In 2015 she premiered an intimate composition *Dobro do – Episodes from the life of a singer* at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam together with the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra and Gordan Nikolić. In March 2016 she returned as part of the ZaterdagMatinee to perform the world premiere of the complete *Pessoa Cycle* by Jan van de Putte, together with the Asko|Schönberg ensemble and Reinbert de Leeuw. A CD of that live performance will be released in autumn 2016.

Throughout her career Barbara has collaborated with many conductors including Jaap van Zweden, Gennadi Rozjdestvenski, Neeme Järvi, Kenneth Montgomery, Paul McCreech, Stefan Soltesz, Jan-Willem de Vriend, Antony Hermus, Otto Tausk, Uros Lajovic, and Per-Otto Johansson, and has performed with The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Gabrieli Consort and Players, Orquestra Simfónica de Barcelona, Essner Philharmoniker, St.Luke's Orchestra, Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra and most Dutch orchestras.

Barbara has a strong affinity with *Lieder*, performing recitals with Phyllis Ferwerda, Richard Egarr and Julius Drake. Her debut CD with the Ebony Band *Around Prague* for Channel Classics was praised by both national and international press.

In the coming seasons Barbara will perform with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Academy of Ancient Music, Orchestre National de Lille, Tiroler Symphonie Orchester Innsbruck, The Hague Philharmonic and Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra.

The basis for her musical development was set in Slovenia at the Academy of Music in Ljubljana and later at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. She has been coached by Sasja Hunnago, Meinard Kraak, Ann Murray, Graciela Araya and Anne Sofie von Otter. She was a member of The New Opera Academy and the Dutch Opera Studio.

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version: December 2016