

## **Ricarda Merbeth | Soprano**

The German soprano Ricarda Merbeth is one of the leading singers in her field. Audiences and critics alike regard her as one of the most outstanding interpreters of Wagner and Strauss of our time.

Having studied at the University of Theatre and Music “Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy” in Leipzig, it was in Magdeburg and Weimar that she began her career.

She made her debut as Marzelline in *Fidelio* at the Vienna State Opera House in 1999, and remained there as a member of the chorus until 2005. Her roles at the Vienna State Opera House have included Contessa, Donna Anna, Pamina, Fiordiligi, Chrysothemis, Elisabeth, Eva, Irene, Elsa, Marschallin and Sieglinde.

Her Daphne in a new production of Richard Strauss’s eponymous opera at the Vienna State Opera House in 2004 was a special highlight of Ricarda’s career to date, and it was this title role that cemented her breakthrough as an international singer. She was honoured with the Eberhard Waechter Medal in 2001 and appointed as an Austrian Kammersängerin by the Vienna State Opera House in 2010. Regular engagements as a guest singer have maintained her strong relationship with the Vienna State Opera House to this day.

Bayreuth Festival has been the venue for a number of other key milestones in her career, for example the roles of Freia and Guttrune in Jürgen Flimm’s production of the Ring Cycle in 2001, Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* in 2002- 2005 and 2007 and Senta in the current production of *The Flying Dutchman* from 2013 to 2018.

Ricarda Merbeth has sung on a freelance basis since 2006, taking important roles in both new and repertory productions at leading opera houses: Helen (*The Egyptian Helen*), Sieglinde (*The Valkyrie*), the title role in *Ariadne on Naxos*, Marietta (*The Dead City*), Marschallin (*The Knight of the Rose*), Senta (*The Flying Dutchman*), Leonore (*Fidelio*), Emilia Marty (*The Makropulos Affair*), Elsa (*Lohengrin*), Marie (*Wozzeck*), Isolde (*Tristan & Isolde*), Goneril (*Lear*), Chrysothemis (*Elektra*), Elisabeth and Venua (*Tannhäuser*) and Brünnhilde (*Siegfried*).

The many leading opera houses and centres of musical culture to have welcomed her to their stages include the Hamburg State Opera, Bavarian State Opera (Munich), La Scala (Milan), Deutsche Oper (Berlin), New National Theatre (Tokyo), Opéra National de Paris, Teatro Real (Madrid), Opera Amsterdam, Toulouse, Marseille, Barcelona, Helsinki, Stockholm, Zurich, Sydney, Vienna (including the Musikverein) and New York.

Ricarda Merbeth has worked with an array of renowned conductors such as Pierre Boulez, Semyon Bychkov, Riccardo Chailly, Myung-whun Chung, Daniele Gatti, Marek Janowski, Mariss Jansons, Philippe Jordan, Fabio Luisi, Ingo Metzmacher, Kent Nagano, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Seiji Ozawa, Donald Runnicles, Pinchas Steinberg, Christian Thielemann, Constantin Trinks.

Concert performances have included the Wesendonck Lieder, Benjamin Britten's War Requiem, Beethoven's Missa Solemnis, the Stabat Mater (at the Musikverein in Vienna), Leoš Janáček's Glagolitic Mass (under Philippe Jordan at the Wiener Konzerthaus), Richard Strauss's Four Last Songs and Brentano-Lieder, Ariadne at the 2013 Richard Strauss Festival in Garmisch Partenkirchen, a recital featuring compositions by Berg, Strauss and Schubert in the Amphithéâtre at the Opéra Bastille and Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 8.

Future engagements up to and including 2019 include Brünnhilde (Siegfried) and the Marschallin (The Knight of the Rose) in Tokyo, Isolde in Turin and Amsterdam, Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 8 in Copenhagen, Leonore (Fidelio) at the Vienna State Opera House, the title roles in Elektra and The Egyptian Helen at La Scala in Milan and the title role in Turandot at the Deutsche Oper in Berlin. The roles will be sung under the baton of a list of renowned conductors: Iimori Tajiro, Gianandrea Noseda, Fabio Luisi, Adam Fischer, Christoph von Dohányi, Alexander Vedernikov and Franz Welser-Möst.

The following recordings featuring the voice of Ricarda Merbeth are available from all good music shops:

CDs: Richard Strauss's Four Last Songs and Brentano-Lieder (Staatskapelle Weimar, CD, NAXOS), The Flying Dutchman and Rheingold under Marek Janowski (both PENTATONE), Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 8 (NAXOS)

DVDs: The Flying Dutchman (OPUS ARTE), Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (UNITEL CLASSICA) and Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 8 under Riccardo Chailly and Symphony No. 2 under Mariss Jansons (both NAXOS).

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