

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. She made her debut as Marzelline in *Fidelio* at the Vienna State Opera House in 1999, and remained there as a member of the ensemble 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 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 Gutrune 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 in many leading opera houses: 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. Here she is singing important roles as 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 / Valkyrie / The twilight of gods*). 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. 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.