

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 Marzeline 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 honoured with the Eberhard Waechter Medal in 2001 and appointed as an Austrian Kammersängerin by the former director of the Vienna State Opera, Ioan Holender, 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, taking important roles 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*), Elektra (*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. Concert performances have included the *Wesendonck Lieder*, Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, the *Stabat Mater* from Szymanowski (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*, Gustav Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*.

Ricarda Merbeth has worked with an array of renowned conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Boulez, Semyon Bychkov, Riccardo Chailly, Myung-whun Chung, Christoph von Dohnányi, 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.

In November 2018 she made her successful debut as Elektra in the legendary staging of Patrice Chéreau at La Scala.

Future engagements 2019 are et al Elektra at Staatsoper Unter den Linden Berlin, Senta (Flying Dutchman) at Semperoper Dresden, Turandot at Opéra de Marseille, Salome with Osaka Philharmonic Orchestra, The Dyer's Wife (The Woman without a Shadow) at Philharmonie Berlin, Helena (EGYPTIAN HELENA) at La Scala in Milan.