

# mezzosoprano MERJA MÄKELÄ



## Biography

The Finnish mezzo-soprano Merja Mäkelä studied at the National University College of Opera in Stockholm, Sweden with Professor Dorothy Irving and at Stadia Helsinki Polytechnic, Finland in the degree program of classical music with a principal dramatic soprano Anita Väلكki. In spring 2007, she studied at the academy of music Musikhochschule Hanns Eisler in Berlin with Professor Anneliese Fried. Since 2010, Merja Mäkelä has worked under the guidance of Professor KS Hanna Schwarz and Professor Janice Harper-Smith.

From 2007 until 2010, Merja Mäkelä worked with Theater Kiel, Germany as soloist in their opera ensemble where she debuted in the title role of Dido/n in *Didon and Dido & Aeneas* with excellent reviews. Her roles included Orlowsky in *Die Fledermaus*, Mercédès in *Carmen*, Costanza in *L'isola disabitata* by Haydn, Ruggiero in *Alcina*, in the titelrole of Hansel in *Hansel & Gretel*, Polina in *The Queen of Spades*, as Magdalena in *The Meistersinger of Nürnberg*, as the White Princess in *Die weiße Fürstin* in Munich Biennale among many others. In addition to her opera engagement, she was asked to perform solo lied recitals in her homeland Finland in 2008 and in spring 2009 at the Theater Kiel. Merja was also soloist in *Messiah* from Händel with Kiel Camerata in spring 2010.

2011 Merja Mäkelä was welcomed to sing the title role in a German premiere of Kaija Saariaho's opera *Adriana Mater* at the Theater Osnabrück. Furthermore, she gave a solo recital in the festival *Nordischer Klang* together with professor Heikki Pellinen and was soloist in Berlioz' *Symphony Romeo & Juliette* at the Operahouse of Münster as well as in Bach's *Magnificat* with the Pori Symphony Orchester in Finland. For her interpretation of *Adriana* in Kaija Saariaho's opera *Adriana Mater*, Merja Mäkelä was nominated for the candidacy of the Germany's national Theater price *Der FAUST* as the singer-actress 2011.

In January 2012, Merja Mäkelä was to be heard as Melibéa in Rossini's *Il Viaggio di Rheims* at the Finnish National Opera. In the summer 2012 Merja sang the role of Parashas Mother in Strawinsky's *Mavra* in the special project of the Frankfurt Opera. She also performed *Le Bal Masqué* from Poulenc with the Berlin Concert House Orchestra and attended to the jubilee tour of the Landesjugendorchester Baden-Württemberg as soloist in *Das Lied von der Erde* by Gustav Mahler in the autumn 2012. The both works were sended by German Radio (Deutschland Radio Kultur and SWR).

In spring 2013 Merja was heard as soloist in Bachs St. John Passion with Camerata Kiel as well as in St. Matthew Passion with Tallinn Baroque Orchestra. In 2014 she was heard as Cherubino in the *Wedding of the Figaro* by Tampere Opera as well as Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* at the Savonlinna Opera Festival. In 2016 Merja Mäkelä took over several mezzo-parts in Theater and Philharmonic Thüringen such as the titel role in 'Viktoria and her Hussar', Martha's Nancy and Rigolettos Maddalena as well as concerts. 2016/ 2017 Merja was heard as the alt in Beethoven's 9th Symphony in Germany and in Finland with Turku Philharmonic Orchestra. In the Summer 2017 Merja Mäkelä will be heard in Savonlinna Operafestival again. She has several opera roles under preparation such as Bianca in 'The rape of Lucretia'.

Merja attended the first Zinka Milanov-competition 2015 and was noted as the only North European singer on the final round in Rijeka, Croatia. She won the scholarship in Renata Tebaldi-competition 2011 reaching the semifinals. Merja reached the finals in the National Timo Mustakallio competition 2004 and in the National Pentti Koskimies Lied competition 2003. In summer 2005, she sang in the finalist concert in the Savonlinna Opera Festival, Finland and was invited to take part in Sherrill Milnes program in Orlando and New York 2005-2006. Merja Mäkelä has been awarded the Tampere Opera Grand Prix scholarship in 2005 and the Bayreuth Scholarship 2012 by the Finnish Bayreuth Society. Merja has participated in master classes with noted artists such as Prof. KS Christa Ludwig, Trish McCaffrey, Teresa Berganza and Prof. KS Brigitte Fassbaender.

## Training

National University College of Opera in Stockholm -2007

Music pedagogue (Voice teacher), Stadia Helsinki 2007

Music pedagogue (Music Instructor), PIRAMK Tampere 2005

Several masterclasses with such noted artists as Sherrill Milnes, Prof. KS Christa Ludwig,

Madame Teresa Berganza, Prof. KS Birgitte Fassbaender

Private studies with Prof. KS Hanna Schwarz and Janice Harper-Smith

## Contracts

Soloist in the ensemble of Theater Kiel 2007- 2010

Freelancer 2010-

Soloist in the ensemble of Theater Gera & Altenburg 2016

Freelancer 2017-

## Guest appearances

Finnish National Opera, Tampere Opera, Frankfurt Opera, Theater Kiel, Theater Osnabrück, Theater Gera/ Altenburg, Munich Biennale as well as a soloist with Lohja Symphony Orchestra, Pori Sinfonietta, Münster Symphony Orchester, Kiel Camerata, Thüringen Philharmonic, Tallinn Baroque Orchester, Baden-Württemberg Youth Orchestra (LOJ), Berlin Concert House Orchestra, Savonlinna Opera Festival.

# Operatic repertoire

A. Berg:	Wozzeck	Margret
G. Bizet:	Carmen	Mércèdes, Carmen (stud.)
H. Dupont:	Antar	Selma
A. Dvořák:	Rusalka	3rd Dryade
F. von Flotow,	Martha	Nancy
Ch. W. Gluck:	Orpheus und Eurydike	Orpheus
A. Gryca, K. Lang, R. Strauss:	Der Sieg über die Sonne (WP)	Singer
G. F. Händel:	Alcina	Ruggiero
J. Haydn:	L'isola disabitata	Costanza
E. Humperdinck:	Hänsel und Gretel	Hänsel
M. Illés:	Die weiße Fürstin (WP)	3. Weiße Fürstin
P. Mascagni:	Cavalleria rusticana	Mamma Lucia
J. Massenet:	Werther	Charlotte (stud.)
C. Monteverdi:	L'incoronazione di Poppea	Ottavia
W. A. Mozart:	La Clemenza di Tito	Annio
	Le Nozze di Figaro	Cherubino
	Così fan tutte	Dorabella (stud.)
H. Purcell:	Dido and Aeneas	Dido
		2. Hexe
G. Rossini:	L'Italiana in Algeri	Zulma, Isabella(stud.)
	Il Viaggio a Reims	Marchesa Melibéa
K. Saariaho:	Adriana Mater, (German Premiere)	Adriana
H. Sommer:	Rübezahl	Brigitte
J. Strauß:	Die Fledermaus	Orlowsky
R. Strauss:	Der Rosenkavalier	Octavian (stud.)
	Ariadne auf Naxos	Komponist (stud.)
P. Tschaikowsky:	Pique Dame	Polina
G. Verdi:	Rigoletto	Maddalena, Giovanna
R. Wagner:	Die Meistersinger	Magdalena

# Opera roles under preparation

P. Mascagni:	Cavalleria rusticana	Santuzza
G. Verdi:	Don Carlos	Eboli
R. Wagner:	Die Walküre	Fricka

# Contact

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# Photo Gallery

