

LAURA WHALEN

Soprano

Laura Whalen, noted for her beautiful control, precision, and elegance, is a soprano equally at ease in opera roles, orchestra appearances, or in recital. She maintains a schedule that takes her throughout North America. This season she will perform the role of Marguerite in FAUST with Calgary Opera, Violetta in LA TRAVIATA with Edmonton Opera, and the title role of THE MERRY WIDOW with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Her concert engagements this season include Beethoven's MISSA SOLEMNIS with Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY No. 9 with the Grand Philharmonic Choir (Kitchener-Waterloo) and CARMINA BURANA with the Vancouver Symphony. She has performed with most of the major orchestras in Canada as well as opera and symphony appearances in Arizona, Florida, Washington DC, Rochester, and Colorado.

Mrs. Whalen was honoured to inaugurate the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts in the fall of 2006, appearing in the DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN conducted by the late Richard Bradshaw. In this production, she appeared as a Rhinemaiden in DAS RHEINGOLD and GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG and Der Waldvogel in SIEGFRIED. Along with Mr. Bradshaw, Ms. Whalen has collaborated with such musical luminaries as Leonard Slatkin, Pinchas Zukerman, James Meena, Mario Bernardi, James DePriest and Bramwell Tovey.

Other acclaimed leading roles in the repertoire at her command include the title role of Lucia di Lammermoor (Arizona Opera and Pacific Opera), Violetta in LA TRAVIATA (Opera Lyra), Juliette in ROMÉO ET JULIETTE (Opera Lyra and Opera Ontario), Mimi in La Bohème (Pacific Opera), Countess in LA NOZZE DI FIGARO (Opera Ontario), Pamina in DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE (Calgary Opera), Norina in DON PASQUALE (Opera Ontario), and Rosalinda in DIE FLEDERMAUS (Toronto Operetta Theatre). A major career highlight for Laura includes the world premieres of two operas by composer John Estacio and librettist John Murrell for the Calgary Opera, both recorded and broadcast by CBC Radio 2's "Saturday Afternoon at the Opera". FILUMENA was the first, with Laura in the title role (also filmed by CBC Television), and FROBISHER in which she sang the role of Anna.

Ms. Whalen's vast symphony appearances include CARMINA BURANA (Washington Choral Society, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Florida Orchestra, and Vancouver Symphony Orchestra), MESSIAH (with the symphonies of Nashville, Toronto, Winnipeg Symphony, and Thunder Bay); ELIJAH (Quebec Symphony) BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY No. 9 (National Arts Centre Orchestra, Florida Orchestra, Toronto Mendelssohn Choir), DIE SCHÖPFUNG (Gautemala City, Calgary Philharmonic, and the Elora Festival in Ontario), MOZART REQUIEM (Rochester Philharmonic, Florida Orchestra, Vail Valley Festival, Colorado), FAURE REQUIEM (Toronto Mendelssohn Choir) and the world premiere of Bramwell Tovey's MAGNIFICAT with the Hannaford Street Silver Band conducted by Richard Bradshaw.

Laura Whalen's collection of recordings include Handel's RINALDO (Naxos) as Almirena in a cast that includes Kimberly Barber, Jennifer Enns Modolo, Barbara Hannigan, Marion Newman, Sean Watson, Giles Tomkins, Catherine Affleck, and the Aradia Ensemble conducted by Kevin Mallon. She also recorded the Brahms REQUIEM with the State Symphony Orchestra of St. Petersburg, recorded in Russia and conducted by Howard Dyck on Consort Caritatis's own label (proceeds from album sales go to World Vision); and even a children's album entitled "The World's Very Best Opera" which features top Canadian stars of the opera stage performing famous opera arias in English: Natalie Choquette, Tracy Dahl, Gregory Dahl, Suzy Leblanc, Daniel Lichti, Aline Kutan, Allan Monk, Lambroula Maria Pappas, Michael Schade, Jean Stilwell, Daniel Taylor, Erin Thrall, all singing with the Budapest Concert Orchestra under the direction of Tamás Gál.

Laura Whalen's small town/east coast origins from a country music-loving family may explain her love for pastoral living, although she also enjoys glam nights out on the town, where her career in opera flourishes. Her fresh, approachable personality lends itself to teaching and giving master classes. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music from the University of Victoria and an Opera Diploma from the University of Toronto. She studied at the Britten-Pears School in England and has received important awards from the Vancouver Opera Guild, Canadian National Music Festival and the National Association of Teachers of Singing.

For a complete repertoire list and more information, please visit www.lauraleewhalen.com.

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