

Dame Josephine Barstow Soprano



Dame Josephine Barstow is recognised as one of the world's leading singing actresses. During a long career she has performed in most of the world's major opera houses and with many of the great conductors singing a varied repertoire of Verdi, Richard Strauss, Puccini and Janáček among others.

Recent and forthcoming engagements include Bernstein's *Kaddish Symphony* with Antonio Pappano and the Orchestra Nazionale di Santa Cecilia Roma; Heidi Schiller *Follies* (National Theatre), Countess *Queen of Spades* (The Grange Festival), Mme Armfeldt *A Little Night Music* (Opera North); Maud in the world premiere of *Jack the Ripper* and Mother Marie *Dialogue of the Carmelites* (ENO); Countess *Queen of Spades* and Lady Billows *Albert Herring* with Opera North and at the Birgitta Festival, Tallinn, Kostelnichka *Jenufa* in Oviedo and with Vlaamse Opera in Luxembourg and Mama Lucia *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Teatro del Liceu in Barcelona. Engagements cancelled or postponed due to Covid include Maud *Jack the Ripper* at Opera North.

She began her career touring with Opera for All and studied at the London Opera Centre. She sang Euridice and Violetta for the Sadlers Wells Opera Company, and at Welsh National Company her roles included The Countess in *Figaro*, Fiordiligi, Violetta, Mimi, Amelia *Boccanegra* and Elisabeth *Don Carlos*. At English National Opera she has appeared as Violetta *La Traviata*, Natasha *War and Peace*, Salome, Elisabeth *Don Carlos*, Leonora *The Force of Destiny*, Leonore *Fidelio*, Jeanne *The Devils of Loudon*, Katarina *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Tosca, Sieglinde, Senta, Emilia Marty *The Makropoulos Case*, The Marschallin and Arabella. Her association with the Royal Opera Covent Garden began early with the Second Niece in *Peter Grimes* and then as Denise in the world premiere of *The Knot Garden* by Sir Michael Tippett, the young woman in Henze's *We come to the River*, Salome, Ellen Orford, Helena *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Santuzza, Leonore, Alice, Lady Macbeth and the Countess *The Queen of Spades*. At Opera North roles have included Tosca, Marie *Wozzeck*, Aida, Medea, Lady Billows and perhaps most notably Gloriana, which was also filmed.

Dame Josephine has performed in Paris, Munich, Vienna, Bayreuth, Berlin, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Houston, Buenos Aires, Hong Kong, South Africa, Japan and Australia. In 1986 she made an historic trip to the Soviet Union singing Tosca and Lady Macbeth. In the same year she appeared in the world premiere of *Die Schwarze Maske* by Penderecki in Salzburg. Herbert von Karajan invited

her to sing the title role in *Tosca* with Pavarotti, and *Amelia Ballo in Maschera* with Placido Domingo. Karajan's death meant the performances of *Ballo* fell to the baton of George Solti, although the recording had already been completed, as planned.

In 1985 Josephine Barstow was awarded a C.B.E. and the International Directors' Fidelio Award. In 1995 she was made a D.B.E. Recordings include: *Ballo in Maschera*, *Gloriana*, *Albert Herring*, *Kiss me Kate*, *Oliver*, *Street Scene*, *Wozzeck*, *Jenufa* and *The Carmelites*. Films include: *Gloriana* – a film and *Owen Wingrave*.