

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*.