

ELISABETH KULMAN | mezzo-soprano / contralto

“Elisabeth Kulman’s fascinating voice is addictive.” (Wiener Zeitung)

The Austrian mezzo-soprano and contralto Elisabeth Kulman impresses audiences with her combination of a distinctive, colourful timbre, musical authority and a charismatic presence. Her vocal flexibility, stylistic empathy and linguistic talents allow her to perform virtually any repertoire, from early music to classical, and from romanticism to contemporary music.

She successfully sang Carmen at the Berlin Staatsoper unter den Linden, Orpheus (Gluck) at the Opéra National de Paris and Marina in Mussorgsky’s Boris Godunov, as well as Verdi’s Mrs. Quickly (Falstaff), Ulrica (A Masked Ball), Fenena (Nabucco), R. Strauss’ Clairon in “Capriccio” and Herodias in “Salome”, Polina and Olga in Tchaikovsky’s operas “Pique Dame” and “Eugene Onegin”, Brigitta (The Dead City/Korngold), Suzuki (Butterfly/Puccini), and many other roles at her home venue, the **Vienna State Opera**. She was awarded the Eberhard Waechter Medal in 2007 for her interpretation of Prince Orlofsky in J. Strauß’ “The Bat”. That same year, her interpretation of the title role in the opera “Il Giustino” by the baroque composer Giovanni Legrenzi at the Schwetzingen Festspiele (conducted by Thomas Hengelbrock) helped it to gain the honour of “Rediscovery of the Year”. At the Vienna State Opera, she will embody the role of Gora in the debut performance of Aribert Reimann’s “Medea” in the 2009/10 season and will debut as Waltraute (Twilight of the Gods) and Fricka (The Rhine Gold, The Valkyrie) in Wagner’s “Ring”. In the opening premiere of the **Salzburg Festival** in 2010, she will sing the title role in Gluck’s “Orfeo ed Euridice”, conducted by Riccardo Muti.

Besides opera roles, another focus of Elisabeth Kulman’s musical activities is **concert** performances. As an internationally sought-after soloist, she is a regular guest at Vienna’s Musikverein and Konzerthaus, and she has collaborated with conductors including Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Franz Welser-Möst, Adam Fischer, Thomas Hengelbrock, Zubin Mehta and Sebastian Weigle. A recording of J.S. Bach’s “Christmas Oratorio” with Peter Schreier as the evangelist and conductor has been released on DVD. Her upcoming highlights in 2009 include Franz Schmidt’s “The Book with Seven Seals”, conducted by Nikolaus Harnoncourt, and Wagner’s “Wesendonck Lieder” at the Vienna Musikverein.

Elisabeth Kulman is also a devoted **lieder** recitalist. In November 2007, she made her highly acclaimed debut with a multilingual evening of songs at Vienna’s Musikverein, accompanied by pianist Walter Moore. Besides duets, she also carries out her own projects in collaboration with exceptional ensembles: She compiled a Mussorgsky programme with an international jazz quartet, and she is singing new adaptations of Mahler songs together with the ensemble Amarcord Wien. Both projects will soon be available on CD.

Background: Elisabeth Kulman first studied Slavic and Finno-Ugric linguistics at the University of Vienna, and only set out on her path to a professional vocal career at a later stage. She completed her vocal studies with honours as a soprano in both opera and Lied/oratorio with Helena Lazarska at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna in 2001. She received the Award for Academic Excellence from the Austrian Federal Ministry of Arts and Culture for her exceptional artistic achievements. That same year, she made her splendidly successful stage debut as Pamina at the Vienna Volksoper and quickly established herself in other Mozart roles, such as Contessa and Donna Elvira. In the summer of 2004, she completed her transition to the mezzo-soprano and contralto Fach and received the Salzburg Festival Prize at the International Summer Academy of Fine Arts in Salzburg for her interpretation of the Wesendonck Lieder. Elisabeth Kulman continues to receive vocal advice from Helena Lazarska.

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www.kulman.info

