

Ann-Katrin Naidu

VITA

Ann-Katrin Naidu has emerged as a most sought-after mezzo-soprano who is at home on the stages of the opera houses as well as on concert and recital stages. Her discography includes her highly acclaimed solo debut recording of lieder by Brahms, Fanny Hensel, Hugo Wolf and Richard Strauss. Ann-Katrin Naidu has performed with the San José Symphony where she sang in Leonard Bernsteins Kaddish Symphony and with the Charleston Symphony singing Marguerite in La Damnation by Hector Berlioz as well as Bach's B minor Mass.

Performances with her home company, the Statetheater Gaertnerplatz in Munich include all major Mezzo roles such as Cherubino, Idamante, Niklas in Tales of Hoffman, the Composer in Ariadne of Naxos, Charlotte in Werther, Mignon, Joan of Arc and her highly acclaimed most successful role Carmen.

In Dresden Semper Opera she made her Debut as Clairon in Capriccio. Zubin Mehta has engaged her to the Nationaltheater in Munich to sing Wellgunde and Waltraute in the Ring des Nibelungen as well as Meg Page in Falstaff.

With Lorin Maazel she went on a concert tour with Luisa Miller that took her to Valencia, Spain and La Scala in Milan.

As a celebrated recitalist and concert artist Naidu performed at the Prague Autumn Festival singing Mahler Songs of a Wayfarer. She sang with the New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra performing the third Symphony by Mahler in Tokyo.

Born in Stuttgart, Naidu studied at the Art Conservatory with Luisa Bosabalian and with Brigitte Fassbaender. She was awarded a diploma with distinction. Already as a student she made her debut at the State Opera of Stuttgart. Following engagements that took her to several Opera houses of Germany and Switzerland, she moved to Munich, where she now lives.

REPERTOIRE

Opera repertoire

Bizet
Carmen

Kalman
Csardasfürstin

Mascagni
Cavalleria Rusticana - Santuzza

Massenet
Werther - Charlotte

Monteverdi
Orfeo-Proserpina
L' Incoronazione di Poppea-Ottone

Offenbach
Hoffmanns Erzählungen - Niklas, La Voix

Strauss
Ariadne auf Naxos - Komponist
Capriccio - Clairon

Strauß
Fledermaus - Prinz Orlofsky

Thomas

Mignon

Tschaikowsky
Johanna von Orleans

Verdi
Otello - Emilia
Rigoletto - Maddalena
Falstaff - Meg Page

Wagner
Rheingold - Wellgunde
Götterdämmerung - Wellgunde, Waltraute
Walküre - Waltraute

Concert Repertoire

J. S. Bach
Kantaten
Mass B minor
Johannespassion
Matthäuspassion
Weihnachtsoratorium
Magnificat
Osteroratorium

C. Ph. E. Bach
Magnificat
Barber
Dover Beach

L. v. Beethoven
C-Dur Messe
IX. Symphony

Berlioz
Les nuits d'été
Damnation de Faust

L. Bernstein
I. Symphony
III. Symphony

B. Blacher
Konzertarie

J. Brahms
Altrhapsodie

D. Buxtehude
Membra Jesu Nostri

M. A. Charpentier
Te Deum
Chausson
Chanson Perpétuelle

A. Dvorak
Messe d-Moll
Requiem

de Falla
Siete Canciones populares
El Amor brujo

Fauré
La bonne chanson

H. Gorecki

2. Symphony

G. F. Händel
Messias
Judas Maccabäus
Jephta
Dettinger Te Deum
Dixit Dominus

J. Haydn
Messen Stabat Mater
Die sieben Worte

M. Haydn
Laudate Populi
Requiem Solemne

Fanny Hensel
Oratorio

Hindemith
die junge Magd

A. Honegger
König David

N. Jomelli
Te Deum

G. Mahler
Rückert-Lieder
Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen
II. Symphony
III. Symphony
IV. Symphony
Kindertotenlieder
Das Lied von der Erde

F. Mendelssohn
Elias
Heimkehr aus der Fremde
Der Onkel aus Boston
Lobgesang

L. Mozart
Missa in C

W. A. Mozart
Kurze Messen
Krönungsmesse
Requiem

Penderecki
Lukaspassion

Ravel
Chansons madecasses
Shéhérazade

G. Rossini
Petite Messe Solemnelle
Stabat Mater

C. Saint-Saëns
Oratorio de Noel

Franz Schmidt
Das Buch mit den sieben Siegeln

F. Schubert
Messen

Stravinsky
Les Noces

H. Schütz
Exequien

G. Ph. Telemann
Kantaten

G. Verdi
Requiem

A. Vivaldi
Magnificat
Gloria
Stabat Mater

R. Wagner
Wesendonk Lieder

C. M. v. Weber
Jubelmesse

PRESS-Reviews

Carmen, Mauritius

The German opera singer Ann-Katrin Naidu affords us an impeccably accurate interpretation of Carmen marked by intelligence, virtuosity and sensuality. The mezzo-soprano not only possesses a vocal range and timbre perfectly suited to the score, but is also an excellent dancer and actress. (L'Express)

Concert on November 7, 2009 with the Münchner Philharmoniker

... However, in Maurice Ravel's "Shéhérazade", all that remained for the musicians of the Münchner Philharmoniker to do was to follow the magnificent singing of mezzo-soprano Ann-Katrin Naidu and to avoid, at least as regards the sound and dynamism, getting in her way. Naidu's full voice, while always retaining the appropriate narrative tone, created amazement, longing, pining - and in ways which, when it comes to fairy tales from the Orient, can hardly be bettered. (Süddeutsche Zeitung)
The Münchner Abendzeitung awarded its "Star of the week"!

Cavalleria Rusticana 3./4.10.09

Firework of Passions

Outstanding Ann-Katrin Naidu, a soprano of beaming elegance and vocal top qualities. Standing ovations! (Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung)

BOCCACCIO

Mezzo-soprano Ann-Katrin Naidu was a dashing, exquisite Boccaccio, her voice rich in both upper and lower registers, her acting and diction impeccable. (Opera News)

FRA DIAVOLO "The visual manner in which Ann-Katrin Naidu presented Lady Pamela was a feast for the audience's eyes, and her warm mezzosoprano voice was faultless" (Neuer Merker, Wien)

Press reports on "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST"

Mezzo-soprano Ann-Katrin Naidu was a true Beauty in every sense of the word. She became the opera's central figure, her transformation from a shy, naïve maiden into a loving woman accomplished through use of her luscious voice and the sheer, splendid force of her stage presence. (Opera News)

Premiere GPT 12.01.2008

As in all her interpretations, mezzo soprano Ann-Katrin Naidu's ("Belle") singing was also superb. Naidu's voice possesses a sweet shading, is especially beautiful in the middle range, and over its entire range it is well intoned and sure. Her warm tone and the subtle phrasing are shown to exceptional advantage in the most expressive passages of the score. In her interpretation, the different emotions are displayed in an extraordinarily elegant and poignant way. On the other hand, finding another singer who could, physically, embody the role of "Belle" so convincingly would be extremely difficult. (Mundoclasico.com)

Ann-Katrin Naidu as "Beauty" succeeds in presenting the character's compassion, her love for her father (Holger Ohlmann) and for the "Beast", in a plausible and touching way. (Merkur)

Ann-Katrin Naidu was a real stroke of good luck in this role. Thanks to her oriental origins and her beautiful appearance on stage, in contrast to the tarted up sisters, she was, quite simply, Beauty. With her warm mezzo soprano, in the unfortunately halting German translation, she sang her quiet, honest replies while radiating something which has become rare: mild reticence, gentle elegance and, above all, grace. The ideal embodiment of a difficult role which in no way seemed artificial. (Deutschlandradio)

Ann-Katrin Naidu plausibly embodied the change from Cinderella with her sewing to a radiant beauty. (Abendzeitung München)

... superbly sung by Ann-Katrin Naidu (TZ München)

Glass stressed the lyrical moments, which superbly accommodates AKN's velvet mezzo soprano as well as Julian Kumpusch's smooth baritone. (Süddeutsche Zeitung)

A matinée with the Bremer Philharmonic

Ann-Katrin Naidu has a flexible, attractive voice, combined with plenty of temperament and creative power. These are features which are always advantageous when it comes to interpreting de Falla's Lieder. As a result, this concert was a tremendous success, and it is to be hoped that it will not be the last of its kind. (Weserkurier)

An evening of Lieder "Naidu bewitches the audience with velvet in her voice"

"WIMSEN (moc) Last Sunday, in the rural setting of the Wimsener Mühle, the cultural landmark, mezzo-soprano Ann-Katrin Naidu presented an evening of Lieder, delighting the audience with a concert of very high quality. The main focus of the evening was on the romantic art song (Kunstlied), and she was accompanied at the piano by Reutling pianist Friedemann Treutlein. In addition to her regular performances at Munich's Gärtnerplatztheater, the very popular singer also performs internationally. On this particular occasion, Ann-Katrin Naidu warmed up with Schubert's relatively unknown "Die Männer sind méchant", which is variously translated as "Men are wicked", "Men are unfaithful" or "Men are cruel". At the same time, she created an amusing touch with the exaggerated characterisation of the girl who is confessing to tingling feelings in her approaches to the opposite sex.

The two following popular pieces by Schubert were an early highlight of the concert: "Gretchen am Spinnrade" (Gretchen at the spinning wheel) and "Tod und das Mädchen" (Death and the Girl). With great conviction, Ann-Katrin Naidu presented Gretchen's passionate devotion to her overwhelming feelings for Faust, while the piano embodied the highest level of excitement in mirroring the clicking sounds made by of the spinning wheel. And then, the icy arrival of Death, whose monotonous, wan speech took the girl from the world of the living. The audience held its breath.

Velvet perfection

One of Ann-Katrin Naidu's strengths in opera is the sheer volume of her voice, as she demonstrated in her wildly applauded encore of the "Habanera" from "Carmen". However, this time she concentrated on the expressive and introverted genre of the "Kunstlied". She used her velvet voice, technically perfect and with supple changes of register, to provide a cultivated interpretation in which infinite amounts of creative colours were at her disposal.

Unique atmosphere

Not least was this to the benefit of to the French Lieder of Debussy and Fauré, bathed in sound, which she sang in the second part of the evening. She had started impressively with Lieder by Brahms, deeply moving the audience with the depth of feeling and tragedy which permeate them. The audience clearly enjoyed this concert, which took place on a balmy summer evening, and with an outdoor aperitif. The unique ambience between forest and rocks also played its part in creating the special atmosphere.

Press reports on the premiere of Cavalleria Rusticana

"...una voz siempre aterciopelada, de rico colorido y buena impostación, con la que se mueve cómodamente por toda la partitura; a esto se suma una vasta gama de recursos expresivos, gran capacidad de matización tanto musical como dramática y una dicción diáfana." (Ritmo)

With ecstatic fire in her highly expressive soprano voice, Ann-Katrin Naidu demonstrates the longing

for love, and the pain caused by love, which Santuzza experiences. (Donaukurier)

Ann-Katrin Naidu compensated for this with blazing intensity and her extremely impressive representation and psychological study of an outcast who, with stigmata on her hands, seeks her salvation in religious faith. (Süddeutsche Zeitung) Ann-Katrin Naidu is at the natural centre of the Cavalleria. Her mezzo-soprano voice is ideally suited to Santuzza's upper register. This matches the fact that, even in major outbursts, she always keeps to the silvery, shimmering line, confidently fashioned, and never loses herself in pathos. (Münchner Merkur)

MAGICAL MOMENTS "Winterreise" with Ann-Katrin Naidu

With the performance by mezzo-soprano Ann-Katrin Naidu, the concert, accompanied by explanations of the music, turned into a series of magical moments. The listeners were enraptured by the sound of her flexible, dark but warm mezzo-soprano voice and the bright clarity when she sang soprano.

She effortlessly achieved the changes in register and the finest dynamic nuances, letting her voice become livid at the end of "Wegweiser", (...eine Straße muß ich gehen / die noch keiner ging zurück" - "The road marker" - One road I must take, one from which no-one has returned"), aggressively highlighted the (self-)suggestive vivacity in "Mut", ("will kein Gott auf Erden sein / sind wir selber Götter" - "Courage" - If God forsakes the earth, then we ourselves are gods).

Thoughtfully, sympathetically, and playing to match her breathing - this is how Friedmann Treutlein accompanied her at the grand piano. For lack of time, five of the Lieder in the cycle were sacrificed to the concept of the concert with its explanations.

The more than 250 members of the audience, who applauded enthusiastically, would certainly welcome another performance by the celebrated singer, but next time with the complete "Winterreise"! (Schwäbisches Tagblatt, November 25, 2004)

The soirée in the Gärtnerplatztheater on November 5, 2004.

Ann-Katrin Naidu is the possessor of the highest level of quality which exists in this repertoire; her voice ranges from a velvet centre, via beautiful, dark depths, to silvery heights; the phrasing is rich, yet controlled, and the melodic lines are powerful, organic and unexaggerated. Her diction is of remarkable clarity, and the singer's attention is devoted more than is customary to the musical expression of the text. Her Brahms is intimate, concentrated, free of decoration, fundamental, warm and very intensive.

In Hugo Wolf's Lieder, Ann-Katrin Naidu reflects the range of colours, lights and shadows which turns her voice into an instrument of fascinating versatility. The exquisite lyricism of the interpretation is underlined by several dramatic accents which always appear in the right place and are coloured with precise intensity. The aplombs are energetic, yet without the singer's voice losing any of its characteristic velvety nature in them. (Published in the Spanish newspaper RITMO)

On the new production of CARMEN in Munich

"Combine breathtaking beauty with erotic charisma, a full and dark mezzo-soprano voice, and a passionate temperament - voilà: Ann-Katrin Naidu is Carmen. There is no need to look into the crystal ball to forecast an extremely promising future for her when she sings this part prolonged applause was the reward for the participants in this entertaining operatic evening - it was worth attending it primarily for Ann-Katrin's performance of Carmen." (The Opernnetz editorial department on www.opernnetz.de)

Recital

Ann-Katrin Naidu, reciting in cultivated fashion, and with captivating sureness of intonation. (Stuttgarter Zeitung)

For many in the audience, listening to the young contralto with her lean, expressive voice was a very special experience indeed. (Rhein-Neckar Zeitung)

Her remarkable voice control, without any shrillness or uncertainty, her distinct articulation, her flexibility and ability to modulate the soft timbre of her voice - we shall hear a lot more of these. (Filderzeitung)

Her voice possesses a timbre which is full of warmth and lustre, but also her high notes, which, gently and with a skilful change of register, she transformed into a ringing pianissimo. And what is more, she has the ability to get inside the modest yet so meaningful form of the Lied, and to express the thoughts, moods and emotions concealed within it. (Südwestpresse)

In the very distinct range of Franz Schubert's Lieder, Ann-Katrin Naidu knew how to show off to advantage her high degree of musicality and intelligence of presentations. Songs of love and triumph, fear of death and joy at life after death were all equally impressive. "Gretchen am Spinnrade" (= Gretchen at the spinning wheel) became a breathless hymn to the power of emotion. Wild passion alternates with profound desperation - these are all moods which, thanks to her faultless technique, sparkling high or low notes, Ann-Katrin Naidu created in a way which was entirely natural. (Neue Wochenzeitung)

The premiere of the Schwetziger Schloßfestspiele

... and with Jennifer, the composer has created the ideal role for the smooth and richly coloured mezzo-soprano voice of the highly expressive Ann-Katrin Naidu, which made it somewhat difficult for the safe baritone of Andreas Scheibner as Jan. (Pforzheimer Zeitung)

Even if they drift towards the final catastrophe with almost fatalistic equanimity, with their vocal presence, Andreas Scheibner and Ann-Katrin Naidu shine gloriously as lovers with sparkling little outbursts. (Dresdener Neueste Nachrichten)

Bass baritone Andreas Scheibner as Jan, and mezzo-soprano Ann-Katrin Naidu as Jennifer, brilliantly master their substantial radical roles, in which a controlled shift in their voices is often required. (Neue Musikzeitung)

The composer:

Dear Ann-Katrin, I will forever be grateful for your absolutely fantastic voice, the enormous amount of work you put in, your marvellous presence and strength in the part of Jennifer, which you perform in such a subtle and vivid way!

Warm greetings, Adriana Hölzky

On the concert performance of "Werther" in the Weimar National Theatre.

Ann-Katrin Naidu, with her smooth, pure, immaculate voice and innumerable forceful moments of structuring, always harmonious even in moments of dramatic exaltation.

Ariadne auf Naxos

The cast in this opera house has never been better: Ann-Katrin Naidu is every composer's ideal singer, demonstrating blazing enthusiasm and elegance of line. (Orpheus, 9/2001)

Jungfrau von Orléans (The Maid of Orleans) A victory without a sword or armour

The Maid of the Gärtnerplatz

Ann-Katrin Naidu is the imposing eponymous heroine, whose metallicly scintillating mezzo-soprano voice climbs effortlessly into an exuberant soprano. Her voice, with its soft changes of register, its phrasing and diction, provides evidence of the best possible training. When her voice flashes like the sword, Tchaikovsky's "Maid of Orleans" has found the right interpreter. Although Ann-Katrin Naidu, from Munich's "Gärtnerplatz" theatre, had to get by without armour and glistening weapons, there was never any doubt about her victory. Presumably the fact that she is a member of the ensemble - starting next season, she will also be appearing at the State Opera House, the Gärtnerplatz's "big sister" - was the reason for again presenting Tchaikovsky's opera, which is so rarely produced, to the public in Munich, at least concertante. (Münchner Merkur) Ann-Katrin Naidu, as the Maid of Orleans, added a particularly sparkling star to the brilliance of the ensemble. By the sheer virtue of her charisma, she was the ideal personification of Jeanne d'Arc. Naturalness, youthfulness and beauty were combined with self-confidence, humility, and the ability to project her personality. Just as Jeanne d'Arc did with her sword, so the singer controlled her youthful voice safely and brilliantly. She was easily able to take up the contest with the orchestra, the attractive timbre of her voice standing out against the raging torrents of sound. (Das Opernglas, 6-2001)

The lovely Ann-Katrin Naidu played Joan of Arc with fervour. Although the role requires her to pull out all the vocal stops, she did herself proud throughout. (OPERA NEWS)

Orpheus and Eurydike

Ann-Katrin Naidu as Orpheus is the dominating personality of the evening. Her bright, adaptable contralto floats effortlessly over the sound of the orchestra, yet its youthful force never has an insistent or forced effect. (Stuttgarter Zeitung)

Mignon

In contrast to this, the female producer of Mignon calls for a sensitive, more subtle performance whose standard can be measured against those of spoken theatre. Ann-Katrin Naidu personified the role of Mignon - this rootless being, driven by intolerable longing, "ni garáon, ni femme", with breathtaking suspense and the presence of a full voice. (Evangelischer Sonntagsgruß)
Thanks to the way she graces the stage, her acting and musical abilities and her pleasantly even mezzo-soprano voice, Ann-Katrin Naidu gave a convincing performance in the title role. (Das Orchester)

The mezzo-soprano singer is not only beautiful, but equally attractive to listen to; with her consistent, rounded notes, extended phrasing and intense expression, the singer keeps Mignon's romance from succumbing to sentimentality. (Saarbrücker Zeitung)

This was reason enough for the "Gärtnerplatz" to revive what had been forgotten, especially as, thanks to Ann-Katrin Naidu, the role is presented by a first-class singer. She credibly displays the change experienced by Mignon, as intended by the director, and does full justice to the musical aspects of the role. With her warm, even sensuously radiant mezzo-soprano which soars to superb heights with dazzling changes of register, she bewitches the public. (Münchener Merkur)
Thanks to the beauty of tone of her voluptuous mezzo-soprano voice, the eponymous heroine has no difficulty in standing out. (Neue Züricher Zeitung)

... Ann-Katrin Naidu, in the title role as Mignon, was radiant with her superb soprano voice and convincing acting ability. The ideal singer for the role! (Reichenhaller Tagblatt)
Only Ann-Katrin Naidu as Mignon saved the evening - a magnificent vocal and acting performance which made the fascination radiated by this androgynous 19th century figure believable. (Landshuter Zeitung)

There were loud cheers for the singers, above all for mezzo-soprano Ann-Katrin Naidu in the title role - with softly flowing tones and captivating intimacy - what a stroke of luck! (Abendzeitung / Distinction "Star of the week")

Carmen

Casting Ann-Katrin Naidu as Carmen is absolutely right. The timbre of her voice makes the "Seguidilla" become the seductive song of the experienced gypsy woman, the one who dominates everything. When she dances for José in the second act, it is not only her voice which is graceful - so is her dance. (Landshuter Zeitung)

Die Csárdásfürstin

As a mezzo-soprano, Ann-Katrin Naidu is a rather unconventional choice for the title role. Her voice is more voluptuous, full when singing the high notes, and extremely spirited in the chest register, which gives the mental independence of this Csárdás princess its own, quasi- emancipated touch. (Süddeutsche Zeitung)

In Ann-Katrin Naidu, the theatre has at its disposal an elegant and attractive performer who convincingly plays a central part and whose voice does full justice to the role, even in extreme registers. (Orpheus)

The Marriage of Figaro

Ideal in the role: Cherubino, whose boyish, awkward movements were skilfully displayed by Ann-Katrin Naidu. At the same time, she knew how to present intensively, in musical terms, his first tender awareness of emotions. (Wormser Zeitung)

Humperdinck, Hänsel and Gretel

... Ann-Katrin Naidu as Hänsel was new to the ensemble. Agile in her acting ability, a voice that is clear as a bell, a boy in every gesture and movement, and at the same time a fine mezzo-soprano voice with its easily-attained high notes and a middle register which is soft as velvet. (Mannheimer Morgen)

Christmas oratorio

In Ann-Katrin Naidu's voice there was something of that intangible charisma which conveyed something of the onset of the transcendence, the monstrous, an unearthly quiet, which, with her "Schlafe mein Liebster (= Sleep, my darling) she set against the surging instrumental movement. (Holsteiner Bote)

Ann-Katrin Naidu, contralto, possesses brilliance combined with self-assuredness, but in addition

she has a supple, warm timbre which was ideally suited to the tenor of Bach's arias. (Stuttgarter Zeitung)

Boris Blacher

... followed by the German premiere, in which Ann-Katrin Naidu, the young mezzo-soprano, was an ideal soloist. With her warm voice, discreet feeling for blues and her distinct English- language recitation, she succeeded in achieving precisely that balance between the intuition and thoughtful distance with which the text deals. As the enthusiastic and spontaneous applause showed, Ann-Katrin Naidu's natural performance succeeded in arousing a great deal of sympathy for this extremely current opus. (Tagesspiegel Berlin)

Saar music festival, radio concert

The concert gave Ann-Katrin Naidu an opportunity to shine with her voice, which easily reaches the highest notes. She sings confidently, the warm timbre of her voice recalling the young Berganza. (Rheinpfalz)