



Hilary Summers

Contralto

Born in South Wales, contralto Hilary Summers has recorded over forty CDs spanning works from the early baroque period to the present day and has sung in most of the major concert halls and opera houses around the world. Her three-octave range has excited the attention of many composers. She has sung in numerous world premières including George Benjamin's *Into the Little Hill* at the Bastille, Paris; Elliot Carter's *What Next* at the Staatsoper, Berlin; Gerald Barry's *The Importance of Being Earnest* in London and New York and *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* with the LA Philharmonic Orchestra in Los Angeles and for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Peter Eotvos' *Le Balcon* at the Aix Festival and *Facing Goya* and *War Work* by Michael Nyman. Most recently she made her debut appearance at Teatro alla Scala, Milan singing 'Nell' in the world première of Kurtag's *Fin de Partie*, before reprising the role for Dutch National Opera.

Hilary worked closely with the iconic composer and conductor Pierre Boulez from 2004. With the Ensemble Intercontemporain, they recorded his masterwork *Le marteau sans maître*, for which she won a Grammy, and performed the piece worldwide. She also performed *Le visage nuptial*, Stravinsky's *Les Noces* and Ligeti's *Aventures* and *Aventures nouvelles* under his inspirational baton.

A regular soloist with leading European period instrument ensembles, she has a close rapport with Christian Curnyn and the Early Opera Company with whom she has recorded Handel's *Semele*, *Partenope*, *Flavio*, *Serse*, and *Il trionfo del tempo*. Other baroque highlights include Handel's *Orlando* (Medoro in Robert Carson's production with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants); Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (Sorceress in Deborah Warner's production with Les Arts Florissants) and Handel's *Admeto* (Trasimede with Christophe Rousset and Les Talons Lyriques at the Sydney Opera House).

Hilary sings internationally on the concert platform in a variety of repertoire from Bach to Birtwistle and has given over one hundred performances of Handel's *Messiah*. Other favourite concert works include Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and Mahler's Symphonies 2, 3 and 8.

Operatic roles include Sorceress; Juno; Cornelia; Polinesso; Amadigi; Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*); Gaea (*Daphne*); Geneviève (*Pelléas*); Baba the Turk/Mother Goose; Hippolyta; Mrs Sedley; Bianca; Mescalina (*Le Grand Macabre*); Tiger Lily/Mrs Darling (*Peter Pan*) and Miss Prism in Gerald Barry's *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Film soundtracks include *The Claim* and *The Libertine* by Michael Nyman, *The Fellowship of the Ring* by Howard Shore and *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *Son of Rambo* and the BBC TV series *The League of Gentlemen* by Joby Talbot.

Highlights last season included the role of Storge in Handel's *Jeptha* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Richard Egarr for the 2019 BBC Proms, concerts with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Early Opera Company and La Serenissima. She also reprised the roles of White Queen and Dormouse in an acclaimed new production of Gerald Barry's *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Highlights for the 2020-21 season include her debuts at the Valencia Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia and Oper Dortmund, both for *Fin de Partie* Kurtag, Irish National Opera *Alice's Adventures Underground* and performances with The Kings Consort, Early Opera Company and Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Further ahead will see her return to English National Opera, Opera National de Paris and performances at the Cheltenham and Newbury Festivals.

