SONYA YONCHEVA -BIOGRAPHY

FOLLOWING A SERIES OF SPECTACULAR DEBUTS AT THE WORLD'S LEADING OPERA HOUSES, SOPRANO SONYA YONCHEVA HAS BEEN HERALDED AS ONE OF THE MOST ACCLAIMED AND EXCITING PERFORMERS OF HER GENERATION.

She has become a permanent fixture on the most important stages of the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House, Bayerische Staatsoper, Berlin State Opera, Wiener Staatsoper and the Opéra de Paris. Her spectacular portrayals of iconic roles have received tremendous acclaim from critics and audiences alike. Of her performances in La traviata at the Staatsoper Berlin, *Die Welt* proclaimed: "She is the finest Violetta since Maria Callas. The Bulgarian soprano Sonya Yoncheva is possibly the best Traviata in the world at present."

Sonya Yoncheva's wide-ranging repertoire includes jewels of the Baroque canon as well as works by Mozart, Verdi, Tchaikovsky, and Puccini. Celebrated for her distinctly beautiful voice and exceptional dramatic presence, Sonya is equally at home on the concert and recital stage, having performed to critical acclaim in several cities including Dresden, Baden-Baden, Verbier, and Prague.

The 2016/17 Season

This season's engagements include Bellini's *Norma* and Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at Royal Opera House, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Mimí at Teatro alla Scala, and a Baroque concert tour. Ms. Yoncheva also returns to The Metropolitan Opera as Violetta in *La traviata*, and is a featured artist at the Met's Gala Concert celebrating its 50th Anniversary at Lincoln Center. Sonya will sing

the role of Vitellia in Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito* at the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden and embarks on a concert tour featuring Baroque repertoire which is highlighted on a Sony Classical album release. *Highlights of past seasons*

In addition to her star turn as Violetta, Ms. Yoncheva's 2015/16 season included celebrated performances as Desdemona in The Metropolitan Opera's season opening production of *Otello*; Micaëla (*Carmen*) at the Royal Opera House; Mimì (*La bohème*) at the Staatsoper Berlin; and the title role in *Iolanta* at Opéra de Paris, where she established herself as the "great reigning" interpreter of the role (*Opera-Online*). She was also a featured artist at the annual Adventskonzert in Dresden.

Other past performance highlights include several Metropolitan Opera appearances, featuring her debut as Gilda in *Rigoletto* and star turns as Mimì in *La bohème*, Violetta in *La traviata*, and Desdemona in *Otello*; Violetta at the Staatsoper Berlin, the Palau de les Arts Valencia, Monte Carlo, and the Bayerische Staatsoper; Marguerite in *Faust* at the Vienna Staatsoper, the Royal Opera House, and the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden; Léïla in *Les Pêcheurs de perles* for the Opéra Comique Paris; and the title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Opéra de Paris.

Sonya Yoncheva is an alumna of William Christie's Le Jardin des Voix and has maintained a special focus the Early and Baroque repertory. Past engagements have featured her in several iconic roles, including Phani/Zima (*Les Indes galantes*) and Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*) on tour with William Christie in Europe, Russia and the US; La Fortuna (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) at the Glyndebourne Festival; Giunone (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*) at the Teatro Real; Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*) in Reims and Versailles; and Poppea (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) and Poppea (*Agrippina*) in Lille and Dijon with conductor Emmanuelle Haim.

Personal data, education, and prizes

Born in 1981, soprano Sonya Yoncheva graduated with performance degrees in piano and voice in her hometown of Plovdiv, Bulgaria under the tutelage of Nelly Koitcheva. Sonya later obtained her master's degree in voice at the Conservatory of Geneva, studying with Danielle Borst. Ms. Yoncheva is also the winner of several renowned international competitions, including top prize and the special CultureArte

prize at Plácido Domingo's Operalia competition (2010). She was honored as the Newcomer of the Year (Singer) at the 2015 ECHO Klassik Awards and received the Special Prize of the Les Amis du Festival for her performance of Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, at the Academy of Festival d'Aix-en-Provence (2007). Sonya has also been awarded several scholarships provided by several Swiss Foundations including "Mosetti" and "Hablitzel."

Sonya Yoncheva is also a first prizewinner of numerous competitions in her home country of Bulgaria: "Competition for Bulgarian Classical Music" in 2000 and "Competition for German and Austrian Classical Music" in 2001. Sonya and her brother Marin Yonchev were lauded as the Singers of the Year in the 2000 edition of the competition "Hit-1," produced by Bulgarian National Television. Ms. Yoncheva has collaborated with acclaimed popular artists including Sting and Elvis Costello, and she retains a keen interest in film music, which includes her past collaborations with famed composer Vladimir Cosma. Sonya records exclusively for Sony Classical and is a featured soloist on a new release of Handel's *Messiah* with the world-renowned Mormon Tabernacle Choir. She portrayed the role of Contessa on a new Deutsche Grammophon release of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, which is nominated for a Grammy for "Best Operatic Recording." Ms. Yoncheva is also a global ambassador for Rolex.