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Bernadette Cullen

Mezzo Soprano

Gurrelieder – Schoenberg

“Majestic in bearing and in magnificent voice, Bernadette Cullen gave an unforgettable performance as the bird which describes the murder of Tove. Even the tritest phrase was here imbued with baleful meaning. This was artistry of the rarest sort, rich in tonal nuance, a voice I would gladly have listened to all night. In presentation that was stellar overall, Cullen’s star shone brightest of all.”

Neville Cohn

The West Australian 28 January 2003

Trovatore - Verdi

“Bernadette Cullen was a riveting, vengeance-driven Azucena, powerful of stature and darkly dramatic of voice, hitting the lowest register like one of the legendary contraltos of old.”

Maria Preauer

Opera June 2001

Bernadette Cullen is one of Australia's foremost mezzo sopranos. She has a large opera and concert repertoire and maintains an active career in Europe as well as working regularly in Australia.

Notable appearances include Brangäne (*Tristan und Isolde*) and Mistress Quickly (*Falstaff*) at the Hamburg Opera and Dalila in *Samson et Dalila* with the West Australian Opera (as part of the 2006 Perth International Arts Festival), Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde* for the West Australian Opera, and Herodias, *Salome* (Brisbane Festival), *Das Lied von der Erde* at the Adelaide Festival, reprising Azucena with Opera Australia, the *Wesendonck Lieder* for TQO and Mahler *Symphony No. 2* for Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Bernadette's recent engagements include Mademoiselle Arvidson in *A Masked Ball* for Opera Australia and Amneris in *Aida* for West Australian Opera, as well as Mahler *Symphony no. 3* with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra under Maestro Zubin Mehta.

Her British debut was made at the Welsh National Opera in the role of Isolier in *Count Ory*, and she returned to that Company to sing the title role in Donizetti's *La favorita* under Carlo Rizzi in Cardiff and at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. Other performance highlights have included Azucena in *Il trovatore* for the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich with Zubin Mehta, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* in Prague for the re-opening of the Tyl Theatre under Sir Charles Mackerras, Zaida in *Il turco in Italia* in Lille, Dido in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Brangäne in *Tristan and Isolde* at the Scottish Opera, *Das Lied von der Erde* conducted by Simone Young at the Vienna Staatsoper and Amneris in *Aida* at the Berlin Staatsoper.

As Principal, and then Guest Artist, with Opera Australia she has performed most of the major roles for mezzo soprano. These include Azucena in *Il trovatore*, Herodias in *Salome*, Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Ortrud in *Lohengrin*, Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde*, Eboli in *Don Carlos*, Charlotte in *Werther*, Sextus in *La clemenza di Tito*, Cassandre in *La Prise de Troie*, Orsini in *Lucrezia Borgia*, Nicklausse/Giulietta in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Amneris in *Aida*, the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Dalila in *Samson et Dalila* and Venus in *Tannhäuser*.

For State opera companies in Australia she has performed Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) for Opera Queensland and Adalgisa in *Norma*, Princess Eboli (*Don Carlos*) and Amneris (*Aida*) for the Victoria State Opera.

Bernadette Cullen is highly regarded as a concert artist. Performances include Verdi's *Requiem* with the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra under Simone Young, under Carlo Rizzi with the Hallé Orchestra, under Skrowaczewski at the Royal Albert Hall and in Budapest, *The Dream of Gerontius* in Stavanger, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* under Charles Dutoit, Rossini's *Le Petite Messe Solonelle*, Paul McCartney's *Liverpool Oratorio* in Norway and Poland under Sir Colin Davis,

Bernadette Cullen's Manager in Australasia is Graham Pushee: graham@artsmanagement.com.au

assisted by Sarah Holloway: sarah@artsmanagement.com.au

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Handel's *Jephtha* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras. Closer to home she has sung Berlioz' *Nuits d'Été* and Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* with New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Fricka in *Das Rheingold* with the Sydney Symphony conducted by Edo de Waart, concert performances of *Die Walküre*, Brahms' *Alto Rhapsody* and Janacek's *Glagolitic Mass* with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, a concert performance of *Salome* with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Waldtaube in *Gurrelieder* with the Australian Youth Orchestra conducted by Diego Masson at the Perth International Arts Festival and later with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* at the 2006 Adelaide Festival.

Her performance in the Mahler Symphony No 2, the last concerts conducted by Markus Stenz as Chief Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is now available as a 2 CD set from ABC Classics. Other recordings are *Pulcinella* with the Australian Chamber Orchestra and *The Bohemian Girl* for Decca under Richard Bonyngue, and most recently William Vincent Wallace's *Lurline* also conducted by Richard Bonyngue.

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