

Hilary Summers

Contralto



Born in South Wales, Hilary Summers is one of the world's few genuine contraltos and has made over forty CDs spanning works from the early baroque period to the present day. She has sung in most of the major concert halls and opera houses of the world.

A specialist in contemporary repertoire. **Hilary Summers'** three-octave range has excited the attention of many composers. Operatic world premieres include the role of **Stella** in Carter's *What Next?* for Berlin State Opera, **Madame Irma** in Peter Eötvös's *Le balcon* at Aix-en-Provence Festival, **Miss Prism** in Gerald Barry's *The Importance of Being Earnest* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and **White Queen, Dormouse** and **Cook** in Gerald Barry's *Alice's Adventures Underground*. Most recently she created the role of **Nell** in Gyorgy Kurtag's *Fin de Partie* at La Scala, Milan to great critical acclaim.

Hilary worked closely with the iconic composer and conductor Pierre Boulez from 2004. With Boulez and the Ensemble Intercontemporain, she recorded his masterwork *Le marteau sans maître*, for which she won a Grammy Award in 2006. She went onto perform 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 greatly respected interpreter of Baroque repertoire, Hilary has long been in demand for Handelian roles. With William Christie she performed and recorded the role of **Medoro** in *Orlando*; with il Complesso Barocco the role of **Idelberto** in *Lotario*, and with Christian Curnyn and the Early Opera Company she has recorded **Juno** in *Semele*, **Disinganno** in *Il Trionfo del tempo*; **Rosmira** in *Partenope*, **Teodata** in *Flavio* and **Amastre** in *Serse*. On the concert platform she has given over one hundred performances of Handel's *Messiah*. Other favourite concert works include Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Rossini's *Petite messe solonelle* and Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*.

She has forged a special relationship with the composer Michael Nyman and has toured the world with the Michael Nyman Band. He has written many works for her voice including the opera *Facing Goya* and the song cycle *War Work*. She has sung on several film soundtracks including *The Claim*; *The Libertine* and the *Diary of Anna Frank* (Nyman), *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (Joby Talbot) and on *The Lord of the Rings* (Howard Shore) and on TV *The League of Gentleman* (Talbot).

Hilary was very grateful to reprise her role of **Nell** in Pierre Audi's award-winning production of Kurtag's *Fin de Partie* at the Palau de les Arts

Reina Sofia in Valencia during 2020. Other recent highlights include filming a DVD of Gerald Barry's *Alice* for Irish National Opera and Olga Neuwirth's *Bählamms Fest* at the Ruhrtriennale Festival.

Next Season she will sing **Little Buttercup** in English National Opera's *HMS Pinafore*, **Fin de Partie/Nell** for Opera National de Paris and give concert performances of *Cesare/Cornelia* at the Palau in Barcelona, *Dido and Aeneas/Sorceress* for Early Opera Company as well as a recording of *Amadigi/Dardano* also with EOC under Christian Curnyn.

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