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# Juliana Zara

## Selected Reviews

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### **Zerbinetta, Ariadne auf Naxos (Nederlandse Reisopera, January 2025)**

"What a virtuosity and brilliance Juliana Zara performed in Grossmächtige Prinzessin. As Ariadne's counterpart Zerbinetta, she tries to win Ariadne over to her worldly outlook on life and love. As an audience you couldn't help but be drawn into it."

**Trouw**

"Zerbinetta's long-awaited exuberant aria Großmächtige Prinzessin finds an enchanting performer in the American Juliana Zara: with her costume sparkling in the spotlight, she flutters like a swallow from one coloratura to the next. What an enrichment that the Reisopera tours the provinces with vocal highlights"

**NRC**

"Juliana Zara's Zerbinetta seems to most successfully fulfil a desire to look inside the character and bring out the truth. Zerbinetta's "A moment means nothing, a glance means all... I am so lonely" in the Prologue was the emotional highlight of the evening, her vulnerability and the unlikely attraction between the two feeling dangerously real. Accompanied by Strauss' lush orchestral harmonies, it spoke to the hall before Zerbinetta's boys thrust themselves back onto the stage, strutting their stuff and flexing their masculinity for comic effect. Zara's seductive trills and tireless vocal acrobatics were dazzling. It was not Bacchus, the "newer God" to whom we ultimately surrender, but Zerbinetta herself when she is united with the Composer in the Opera's closing moments."

**Bachtrack, by Clare Varney**

"Juliana Zara does it all in a sexy Moulin Rouge-minded costume full of feathers and with delicious vocal acrobatics. That coupled with a sparkling interpretation and never too far-reaching, frivolous and sensual physicality, make her Zerbinetta not only a showstopper, but also a fully integrated character in the narrative."

**Place d'Opera**

"[The] duet with Zerbinetta (Juliana Zara) was phenomenal, not least because of the deliciously singing Californian soprano Zara: what ease, what elegance but also expressiveness and empathy. Her dog-toiling aria later in the evening also sounded flawless and senent, with her remaining warm and penetrating in the very many high notes and coloraturas, truly not a sincure in the somewhat dry acoustics... She was the star of the evening..."

**Die Nieuwe Muze**

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### Cheshire Cat, Unsuk Chin's Alice in Wonderland (Concertgebouw Amsterdam, June 2024)

"In addition to her brilliantly powerful colouratura, she impressed the audience with her very natural-sounding, melodious laughter."

**Bachtrack, Michael Klier**

"Juliana Zara virtuosically crooned as the Cheshire Cat..."

**NRC, Loni Verweij**

"Juliana Zara as Cheshire Cat looked equally so enchanting, and she sang accordingly."

**TROUW, Peter van der Lint**

"And Juliana Zara, with cat ears on her head, is delightful as the teasing Cheshire cat."

**VOLKSKRANT, Jenny Camilleri**

### Unsuk Chin's Puzzles and Games with Sejong Soloists (Carnegie Hall (Zankel Hall), May 2024)

"Zara never seemed daunted by the vocal writing: in fact, she seemed to revel in it."

"In Cat's Aria, Zara ventured impressively into the upper extremes of the soprano range, lingering there is a series of amazing (and intentionally annoying) meows-in-alt."

"Zara didn't simply manage it, she triumphed over it - as cymbal crashes bring this dazzling, quirky piece to a close. The soprano basked in a shouting ovation from the crowd, so truly deserved..."

**Oberon's Grove**

"American soprano Juliana Zara, who's spent much of her career in Europe, delivered a wild, no-holds-barred performance..."

"While the Sejong players (conducted by Earl Lee) were uniformly excellent, Zara stole the show; keep an eye out for her on an opera stage near you."

**Feast of Music**

### Olympia, Les Contes d'Hoffmann

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Rayfield Allied  
9-12 The Stableyard  
Broomgrove Road  
London, SW9 9TL, UK  
[www.rayfieldallied.com](http://www.rayfieldallied.com)  
E-mail [info@rayfieldallied.com](mailto:info@rayfieldallied.com)  
Telephone +44 (0) 20 3176 5500  
Facsimile +44 (0) 700 602 4143

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### (Staatstheater Darmstadt, 2023)

“... from the razor-sharp coloratura, which Juliana Zara underpins with grotesquely exaggerated movements of the puppet Olympia...”

**FAZ**

“Juliana Zara is a grandiose Olympia...”

**Frankfurter Rundschau**

“A highly virtuosic performance in sky blue was delivered by Juliana Zara as Olympia. While the nightmarish-dream woman sings her breakneck coloratura, she moves with grotesquely twisted limbs.”

**Echo Online**

“Juliana Zara gives the most virtuoso performance as Olympia. Between her breakneck coloraturas, the soprano acts like a creature from a Frankenstein laboratory - a sewn-up creature in sky blue with only one breast and twisted limbs. She is not entirely harmless: in an unobserved moment, she greedily bites into a pigeon.”

**Opernwelt Magazin**

### Adina, L'elisir d'amore (Staatstheater Darmstadt, 2023)

“The soloist roles are also ideally cast, with the soprano Juliana Zara, a highly expressive Lulu by Alban Berg in Darmstadt last season, and now, a completely relaxed bel-canto singer as Adina... Everyone finds happiness in Darmstadt.”

**FAZ**

“Juliana Zara as Adina is in no way inferior to him in the audience's favor, effortlessly serving up her coloratura lines with a clear soprano...”

**Das Opernfreund**

“Adina is ravishingly embodied by Juliana Zara. Zara lets her focused soprano voice flatter, glitter and shine according to all the rules of the art of seduction. She convincingly and movingly transforms from the flighty love fugitive into a person deeply in love who has no choice but to capitulate to the overwhelming power of her own feelings.”

**Oberhessischer Zeitung**

“Juliana Zara shines as Adina. There was even an extra round of applause for her octopus skirt with tentacles.”

**Hessische Rundfunk**

### Mysteries of the Macabre (Wuppertal Symphony Orchestra, 2023)

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"The excellently agile Juliana Zara, who was vocally confident even at the highest levels, enchanted the audience with this music... Frenetic applause was the result, so there was an encore before the break. With the aria Glitter and be Gay and her radiant coloratura, she completely captivated the audience, who thanked her again with long applause."

**Musenblätter**

"In Ligeti's "Mysteries of the Macabre", it's taken to the extreme by Juliana Zara, who's gone off the rails, theatrically, clownishly, and with unrestrained energy, she exceeds everything that characterizes a normal performance with an orchestra. Juliana offers a brilliant singing and acting performance and is met with storms of enthusiasm."

**Westfalenpost**

### **Title Role, Lulu (Staatstheater Darmstadt, 2023)**

"Her Lulu in the opera of the same name at the Staatstheater Darmstadt was an event that made waves throughout Germany in the recent season. In Ewa Maria Höckmayr's production, the American coloratura soprano juggles with male fantasies and plays them against each other with virtuosity. Zara's Lulu moves across the stage with the infinite lightness of being until she gets caught up in the mills of sex work and is physically and emotionally crushed. The compelling acting is matched by stupendous vocal merits. Juliana Zara's voice is also ideal for this delicate role. Slender, fluid and with weightlessly dabbed top notes, she exuded that rare vocal mercury which the role absolutely needs and which makes it a phenomenon in the first place. Not in a metropolis, but on the edge of the Odenwald."

**-Michael Kaminski (Die Deutsche Bühne)**

"The brilliant... Juliana Zara, whose soprano sounds glassy clear, high, pure and at the same time completely unstrained, plays a terrifically noncommittal Lulu who is nevertheless devoted, in that uniquely Lulu-like way. So unbelievably youthful, fit and without exaltation, she conquers the role and she does so until the end, without any tiredness that so often characterizes the role."

**Opernwelt Magazine**

"Juliana Zara is the ideal vocal choice for the title role [of Lulu] . Slender, fluid and confidently setting the top notes, Zara commands the vocal quicksilver essential to the character."

**die Deutsche Bühne**

"Above all, Juliana Zara in the title role proves her central part in extreme complexity. She succeeds, despite a permanent onstage presence, to keep a secret.

Vocally, the young Californian soprano is an ideal choice because, in addition to her stage presence, she possesses the certainty in the extreme high notes that Berg expressly demands. Thus Zara maintains the desirable fascination of Lulu in the second part of the opera as well, embodying Lulu's descent with dissecting sharpness and clarity."

**FAZ**

"For Zara, it is a highlight of her young career. For years, the soprano has been dealing with this complex part, with this

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dazzling character, you can feel it in every moment.

She spreads a fantastic spectrum of vocal colors and expression: Seductive oaths with velvety soft timbre, the ecstatic top notes clear and electrifying when her Lulu sings the misery of the soul."

**Oberhessische Zeitung**

"Simply magnificent... Juliana sings this insane role with an ease that is very impressive... She plays the ambivalent Lulu very convincingly, sometimes very fragile, then again very antagonistic, and all this in this small space, on this pedestal that is maybe a good metre long. That was really incredible to watch."

**Hessische Rundfunk**

### **Zerlina, Don Giovanni (Staatstheater Darmstadt, 2022)**

"Juliana Zara also masters the character of Zerlina, often wrongly devalued as a supporting role, and dominates the stage..."

"Zara sings a silvery, refined Zerlina, but can also bring forth [in her] a great sadness."

"The singers enhance the way Mozart uses his musical means, how the three women are annoyed by the Don Giovanni in principle, and yet get excited with their eyes wide open: ...Juliana is the most modern, active and youthful Zerlina."

### **Unerhört! Lili Boulanger Recital (Staatstheater Darmstadt, 2021)**

"Juliana Zara... sang 'Clairières dans le ciel' with dramatic expression, an enchanting voice, gently trembling, blooming into a cry"

**Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung**

### **Der Kaiser von Atlantis CD (BR Klassik, Naxos, released in 2022)**

"As the bob-haired Bubikopf, the lively soprano Juliana Zara shines as a ray of hope."

**Abendzeitung München**

"The cast are uniformly strong... and Juliana Zara and Johannes Chum make ardent battlefield lovers."

**Gramophone.co.uk**

## Schön ist die Welt

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### **(Bayerische Staatsoper, Nationaltheater, 2020/2021)**

“Juliana Zara (Opera Studio) and Manuel Günther (Ensemble) shine as a comedic pair, as if operetta was part of the National Theatre’s core business.”

**Abendzeitung München**

### **Mignon**

#### **(Bayerische Staatsoper, Cuvilliés-Theater, 2020)**

“...the sensual Philine, who, thanks to Juliana Zara, drives him into his head and body with her virtuoso, thoroughly erotic coloratura singing.”

**Klassik Favori**

“The breakneck devilry is best expressed in the aria ‘Je suis Titania’ in the second act, which is filled to the highest degree with coloratura. Juliana Zara brings a voice of blazing fire to the evening, even in the brief moment of this aria.”

**Klassik Begeistert**

### **Norina, Don Pasquale in Opera Studio Concert**

#### **(Bayerische Staatsoper, Nationaltheater, 2020)**

“Juliana Zara’s soprano is graceful and slips easily into the highest heights.”

**Abendzeitung München**

“Juliana Zara and Theodore Platt sing the most beautiful negotiation, the best intrigue of the evening. The two are mischievous, perky, and scheming.”

**Klassik Begeistert**

### **Ophelia Sings**

#### **(Bayerische Staatsoper, Nationaltheater, 2020)**

“Juliana Zara can glide effortlessly up to the heights with her coloratura-assured soprano, or dab right there and laugh down from above. Her lively facial expressions make the rather impersonal songs unexpectedly appealing.”

**Abendzeitung München**