

DEBORAH VOIGT

Soprano

Perhaps the most luminous figure in the Met's rising vocal pantheon is Deborah Voigt ... Ms. Voigt has been one of the world's leading dramatic sopranos for some time, and it's a pleasure to report [on] that gleaming Cadillac of an instrument. ... Her deeply vulnerable Amelia ... reminded me of another thing that great opera stars have in common: the ability to take us inside the workings of their art. When that happens, I can't think of a better place to be."

- New York Observer

Deborah Voigt is hailed by the world's critics and audiences as today's foremost dramatic soprano. A recent *New York Times* article stated: "Deborah Voigt, arguably the leading dramatic soprano singing today, has a gleaming voice that easily soars over the largest Wagnerian orchestra."

The singer is often described as unequalled in her repertoire of operas by Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss, and she excels in Verdi and Puccini roles as well. Ms. Voigt has performed in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Walküre*, *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser* and *Der fliegende Holländer*. She has sung starring roles the world over in Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Elektra*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Salome*, *Die Aegyptische Helena* and *Friedenstag*, and – in early 2005 performances in Berlin – added *Der Rosenkavalier*'s radiant Marschallin to her extensive repertoire.

Deborah Voigt's summer travels in 2005 take her from Brussels to Hollywood, and from New York, Canada and Paris to Tanglewood. In addition to participating in Tanglewood's opening night Mahler Symphony No. 8, conducted by Boston Symphony Music Director James Levine, she gives a solo recital with Brian Zeger, and appears for the first time anywhere in the role of Wagner's Brünnhilde when she sings the "Immolation Scene" from *Götterdämmerung*, along with Act I of *Die Walküre* (in which she portrays Sieglinde). James Levine conducts this concert as well. Deborah Voigt joins Barbara Cook and Dianne Reeves at the Hollywood Bowl in a program called "Great American Women" for three concerts at the end of July.

Ms. Voigt officially opens her 2005-06 season singing on tour with the New York Philharmonic in Lucerne and Berlin in September. Despite her already large and varied repertoire, she then adds another new role with her debut performances in Ponchielli's *La gioconda* at Barcelona's Teatro del Liceu in October. She sings her first Metropolitan Opera *Tosca*, as well as Leonore in Verdi's *La forza del destino* at her home house. With tenor Ben Heppner, Ms. Voigt gives concerts in New York's Avery Fisher hall and at Berlin's Deutsche Oper. She sings additional concerts with orchestra in Moscow and Puerto Rico. Recitals in Boston, Berkeley, Dresden and Valencia will be an important part of her season.

Deborah Voigt's Metropolitan Opera roles in 2004-05 were *Tannhäuser*'s Elisabeth – her first appearance at the house in this role – and Amelia in Verdi's *Ballo in maschera*. She also sang Senta in concert performances of Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer*, with James Levine and the Boston Symphony, and Beethoven's Leonore in a concert *Fidelio* at Carnegie Hall. Ms. Voigt also starred in a Richard Strauss Festival at the Deutsche Oper Berlin in January, singing her first *Rosenkavalier* as well as *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and the *Four Last Songs*. In May she sang Act II of *Tristan und Isolde* with Ben Heppner in Cincinnati, with James Conlon conducting.

Concert engagements included Arnold Schoenberg's haunting monodrama, *Erwartung*, with Daniel Barenboim and the Chicago Symphony; an appearance with the bevy of stars celebrating Lyric Opera of Chicago's 50th anniversary; Wagner's "Liebestod" and Strauss's *Four Last Songs* in both Berlin and Toulouse; Alban Berg's evocative *Seven Early Songs* with Lorin Maazel and the New York Philharmonic; the final scene from *Salome* and *Four Last Songs* with Kurt Masur in Paris; a concert of arias and duets with Belgian baritone José van Dam in Brussels, and the world premiere of *Erotic Spirits*, a new work by Stephen Paulus for the Augusta Symphony's 50th anniversary. She will reprise the work with the American Composers Orchestra led by Steven Sloane at Carnegie Hall in the 2005-06 season.



Ms. Voigt also performs widely in concerts and recitals, and made her long-awaited Carnegie Hall solo recital debut in April 2004 to enthusiastic acclaim. One of many representative comments on that significant debut was: "Ms. Voigt proved yet again that she has one of the world's most thrilling voices, a sun-drenched soprano" (*New York Sun*).

She signed an exclusive recording agreement with EMI Classics, and releases her second solo recording – American Songs with Brian Zeger as her piano partner – in autumn 2005. Her first solo CD, *Obsessions* – scenes and arias from operas by Wagner and Strauss – was released in April 2004. It was a Billboard top-five bestseller, and earned superlative reviews such as this in *Opera News*: "She sings a stupendous recital by identifying with each passionate, fierce or possessed woman, inhabiting the character fully. ...Of course Voigt's opulent voice – in waves of glorious, lustrous sound – is perfect in these, her signature roles." Deutsche Grammophon released a live recording of the 2003 Vienna *Tristan und Isolde* in which Voigt made her headlining role debut. Her discography includes many other complete opera recordings.

A devotee of Broadway and American song, Deborah Voigt has given several acclaimed performances of popular fare, including benefit concerts for both Broadway Cares / Equity Fights AIDS and New York Theater Workshop. *Opera News* raved: "Voigt ... comes to pop singing naturally. She creates each musical mood so perfectly and demonstrates such show-biz savvy that it makes me wish she had more opportunities to perform this kind of material. If this were 1970, she would probably be given her own network variety show." Millions of viewers heard Ms. Voigt sing "America the Beautiful" on NBC's nationwide broadcast of Macy's Independence Day fireworks show in 2004, and later witnessed her majestic ride down Broadway in Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.

At the world's major opera houses, Deborah Voigt has earned accolades as Verdi's Aida, Lady Macbeth, Amelia in *Un ballo in maschera* and Leonora in both *La forza del destino* and *Il trovatore*; as Puccini's Tosca and as Cassandre in Berlioz's *Les Troyens*; as Chrysothemis in *Elektra*, Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*, Elsa in *Lohengrin* and Senta in *Der fliegende Holländer*. She has sung these and other leading roles with such internationally renowned conductors as Daniel Barenboim, Leon Botstein, James Conlon, Daniele Gatti, James Levine, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Zubin Mehta, Seiji Ozawa, Wolfgang Sawallisch and Christian Thielemann, as well as Sir Georg Solti and Giuseppe Sinopoli.

After studying at the California State University at Fullerton and in San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, Ms. Voigt won First Prize at the Luciano Pavarotti Vocal Competition in Philadelphia, and the Gold Medal in Moscow's Tchaikovsky Competition. Ms. Voigt holds France's prestigious title *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, and was named *Musical America's* Vocalist of the Year 2003.

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