

Gillian Keith - Biography

A past winner of both the prestigious Kathleen Ferrier Award and the ROSL Singing Prize, and a distinguished graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, British-Canadian soprano **Gillian Keith** made her Royal Opera, Covent Garden debut as Zerbinetta in Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* and has gone on to repeat the role with great success at Ópera de Oviedo and Welsh National Opera. Her most celebrated roles include Poppea in Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, The Woodbird in Wagner's *Siegfried*, Pretty Polly in Birtwistle's *Punch and Judy*, Philine in Thomas' *Mignon*, and Ginevra in Handel's *Ariodante*, in international opera houses and festivals including English National Opera, Scottish Opera, Netherlands Opera, Geneva Opera and Boston Early Music Festival.

Her concert repertoire is wide and varied, and has taken her to some of the most prestigious stages around the world, including the BBC Proms, Boston Symphony Hall, Sydney Opera House, Bregenz Festival, Edinburgh Festival and London's Wigmore Hall, in works ranging from Bach Cantatas, to Mozart's *C Minor Mass*, to Oliver Knussen's *Symphony No. 2*. From her earliest professional concert appearances with John Eliot Gardiner on his Bach Cantata Pilgrimage of 2000 to her celebrated performances at Royal Opera and her recent CD releases of Bach and Handel arias, she has forged successful creative partnerships with many orchestras and organisations, including the BBC Philharmonic, The Sixteen, Handel & Haydn Society, Tafelmusik, Florilegium, Armonico Consort, and the Buxton Festival, and has developed a fruitful musical relationship with pianist Simon Lepper which spans over 20 years.

Highlights of recent seasons include the premiere of Jörn Widmann's *Versuch über die Fuge* with Royal Northern Sinfonia, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* (in which she shared the role of Evangelist), Tom Randle's *Los Nacimientos* with dotdotdot dance and Joanna MacGregor at Dartington Festival, performances of orchestral song cycles by Britten and David Matthews at St John's Smith Square, and the release of Volume 1 of the Complete Bach Cantatas for Solo Soprano with Armonico Consort on Signum Records. She created the role of Miss Spink in Mark-Anthony Turnage's latest opera *Coraline* for Royal Opera, as well as the role of Ruth Ellis in Tom Randle's *Love Me To Death* for the Tête à Tête Festival.

Further performances include *La Resurrezione* with Ars Lyrica Houston, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and Mozart's *C Minor Mass* with Handel & Haydn Society and at the Three Choirs Festival, Handel's *Silente venti* with The Sixteen in Hong Kong, Sydney Opera House and New Zealand, Beethoven's *Christ on the Mount of Olives* at the National Concert Hall, Dublin, Handel's *Messiah* at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Miss Wordsworth in Britten's *Albert Herring* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Kurtág's *Scenes from a Novel* with the Psappha Ensemble, the title role in H.K. Gruber's *Gloria: A Pigtail* at Royal Opera's Linbury Studio Theatre and Bregenz Festival, *The Songbook* with Birmingham Contemporary Music Group at Wigmore Hall, and Bach Cantatas at the Felicja Blumental Festival in Tel Aviv. She has presented her original scripted recital *Debussy And His Muse* at Wilton's Music Hall, Buxton Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival and the Oxford Lieder Festival.

She has recorded the role of Zerbinetta in *Ariadne on Naxos* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Sir Richard Armstrong, as well as orchestral songs by Dallapiccola, Nielsen's 3rd Symphony, and Casella's *Le convent sur l'eau* with Gianandrea Noseda and the BBC Philharmonic, all for Chandos. Other recordings include Handel's *Gloria* and Bach Cantatas with John Eliot Gardiner, Handel's *Messiah* and Mozart's *C Minor Mass* with Harry Christophers, Handel's *Nine German Arias* with Florilegium, and J.S. Bach Complete Solo Cantatas for Soprano, Volume I with Armonico Consort. Her recital discs include Schubert Lieder on Marquis, and with pianist Simon Lepper *Debussy: Early Songs*, and *Debussy Songs For His Muse* for Deux-Elles, as well as *Gillian Keith - bei Strauss* for Champs Hill Records.