

Anu Korsi, soprano

Anu Korsi is one of Finland's foremost international singers, a coloratura soprano with a strong reputation on the world's concert and opera scenes. She is praised for her perfect musicianship, technical skills, expressive interpretations and vast repertoire that ranges from renaissance music to the most advanced contemporary scores. By commissioning and premiering new works for her voice type, she has helped to widen and enlarge its repertoire for the last 30 years, whilst also singing bel canto and presenting forgotten coloratura master-works for today's public. In 2020, she was awarded the Madetoja prize by Finnish composer's society and was also a nominee for the Nordic Council's Music Prize. In 2021, she received the prestigious Erik Bergman Prize for her special achievements in performing and commissioning new vocal repertoire internationally.

Anu Korsi made her debut as an opera singer in 1991 in Ligeti's *Aventures & Nouvelles Aventures* at the Helsinki Festival, conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen. Internationally, she appeared at the Frankfurt Opera in 1993 as Olympia (*Hoffmann's Tales*). Her 70 opera roles contain several critically acclaimed performances of Zerbinetta, Lulu, Gilda, Norina, Queen of the Night and Mother in Law in Kaija Saariaho's *Innocence* in 2021. She sang the huge coloratura role of Catherine in the Finnish premiere of Giacomo Meyerbeer's *L'Etoile du Nord*. Recently, she also performed roles such as Salome, Nannetta, Susanna, Micaela, Rosalinde and Tiresias (Poulenc). John Zorn's *Machine de L'Etre* at the New York City Opera brought her the attribute "Pyrotechnic Grace". Among important title roles she has performed James Dillon's *Philomela* (Paris Odéon, Budapest Festival, Strasbourg Musica, Casa da Música Porto), Peter Eötvös' *Lady Sarashina* (Polish National Opera 2013) and Heinz Holliger's *Schneewittchen* (Theater Basel 2014).

George Benjamin dedicated the soprano role in his opera *Into the Little Hill* especially for Anu. Since the premiere in Paris 2006, she has performed this work in Europe and the USA already 50 times, and most recently at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg and Wigmore Hall London in 2019. Eva's role in Karlheinz Stockhausen's opera *Donnerstag* from *Licht* at the Theater Basel was another critically acclaimed performance. Anu is the only singer ever to have performed all of Eva's massive role in this 6-hour opera where it is usually shared by different singers. She has appeared at the Semperoper Dresden, Stuttgart State Opera, Berliner Festspiele, Salzburg Festival, Wiener Festwochen, Lucerne Festival, Opéra de Paris Bastille, Opéra National de Lyon, Teatro La Scala Milan, Finnish National Opera and Lincoln Center Festival NYC i. a.. She premiered large works including Kaija Saariaho's *Saarikoski* (2013-2020) and *Leino Songs* (2000-2007), Jonathan Harvey's *White as Jasmine* (2000), Esa-Pekka Salonen's *Floof* (1988) and *Wing on Wing* (2004) and Unsuk Chin's *Cantatrix Soprana* (2005).

Concerts led her to the Musikverein Vienna, Wiener Konzerthaus, the Berlin Philharmonie, the Royal Albert and Festival Hall, the Barbican Centre London, the Philharmonie de Paris, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the Alte Oper Frankfurt, the Philharmonie Cologne, the Walt Disney Concert Hall LA, the Osaka Concert Hall, the Birmingham Symphony Hall, the Auditorio della Musica Rome, the Rudolfinum Prague, the Konserthuset Stockholm, the KKL Lucerne and the Musikkitalo Helsinki. Anu Korsi has performed with the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonic, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, the Gewandhausorchester, the Gürzenich Orchestra, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, La Scala Orchestra Milan, the Accademia di Santa Cecilia Rome, the New York Philharmonic, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the LA Philharmonic, the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the Rotterdam Philharmonic, the Helsinki Philharmonic, the Oslo Philharmonic, the Ensemble Intercontemporain Paris, the Gulbenkian Orchestra Lisbon i.a..

She has worked with conductors and directors such as Sir Roger Norrington, Sakari Oramo, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Alan Gilbert, Franz Welser-Möst, Heinz Holliger, Peter Eötvös, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Susana Malki, Hannu Lintu, Francois-Xavier Roth, Martyn Brabbins, Pierre Audi, Arturo Marelli, Lydia Steier, Christoph Loy, Achim Freyer and Claus Guth. A highlight was her collaboration with Christoph Waltz in Matthias Pintscher's *L'Espace Dernier*.

Anu has enjoyed a long partnership with lied pianist Pia Värri, with whom she has recorded two albums: *O'Heart* (songs to Eino Leino poetry) and recently *Sumun Läpi* (complete vocal music with piano by Kaija Saariaho). György Kurtág's *Kafka Fragments* have been featured in her repertoire since 1988, first with Sakari Oramo (Ondine), and later also with violinists Andras Keller, Isabelle Faust, Minna Pensola and Patricia Kopatchinskaja. Her discography includes hundreds of recordings such as Mahler's Symphony No. 4 and B.A. Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten* and Gramophone Award winners Langgaard's Symphony No. 2, Nielsen's Symphony No. 3 and Saariaho's *Leino Songs*.

An important phase in Anu Korsi's career occurred in 2004-2018, when she was founder and Artistic Director of West Coast Kokkola Opera company, and in the last years also Managing Director. Between 2006-2017, the company presented the Kokkola Opera summer festival, which in 2017 marked the 100th year of Finnish independence with a Finnish premiere of Giacomo Meyerbeer's opera *L'Etoile du Nord* (1854). Anu was also director in five operas: Vivaldi's *La Verita*, Detlev Glanert's *Leviathan* and *Der Engel auf dem Schiff*, Puccini's *Suor Angelica* and Kurt Weill's *Der Silbersee*.

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