

Yvonne Naef

A native of Switzerland, Yvonne Naef is one of the most sought-after mezzo-sopranos both in concert and on operatic stages. Her huge opera repertory consists mainly of the major mezzo roles in operas by Verdi (*Aida*, *Il Trovatore*, *Don Carlo*, *Un ballo in Maschera*), which she has sung in prominent theaters such as the Metropolitan Opera, the Royal Opera House, the Vienna State Opera and the Opéra de Paris. In the French repertory she excelled in operas such as *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue*, *Carmen*, *Les Troyens* and *La damnation de Faust* alongside her fondness for Russian operas, and finally, featuring prominently in her artistry – of course – for the operas of Richard Wagner.

On concert stages, Yvonne Naef performs a repertory ranging from Bach to Boulez with very prominent orchestras and conductors. A specialist in Mahler's symphonies and song cycles, she has performed his *Symphonies No. 2, 3 and 8*, *Kindertotenlieder*, *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, *Lieder aus des Knaben Wunderhorn* under the direction of Marin Alsop, Pierre Boulez, Semyon Bychkov, Sylvain Cambreling, Gustavo Dudamel, Christoph Eschenbach, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, James Levine, Kent Nagano, Jonathan Nott and Franz Welser-Möst. Other important conductors she has worked with include James Conlon, Christoph von Dohnányi, Vladimir Fedoseyev, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Daniele Gatti, Michael Gielen, Bernard Haitink, Mariss Jansons, Philipp Jordan, Marc Minkowski, Sir Simon Rattle, Georges Prêtre and Michael Tilson Thomas.

Important milestones of her international career include appearances as Brangäne in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* under Sir Simon Rattle at the Vienna State Opera, Didon in Berlioz' *Les Troyens* at the Dutch National Opera, Fricka in Wagner's *Das Rheingold* at the Opéra de Paris under Philippe Jordan, Kundry in Wagner's *Parsifal* as well as Verdi's Ulrica (*Un ballo in maschera*) and Mrs. Quickly (*Falstaff*) in Zurich. As Ulrica and Fricka, Yvonne Naef also appeared at the Hamburg State Opera. She has been invited by Seiji Ozawa to take part in Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* at the Saito Kinen Festival and has last sung at the Salzburg Festival in Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* under Gustavo Dudamel, further concert appearances leading her to various prestigious venues in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Cologne, Freiburg, Geneva, Munich, Paris, Prague, Tokyo, Vienna, Washington and Zurich.

Highlights of the past seasons saw her participating as a soloist in Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* in Geneva, Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* with the Orchestre de Chambre de Paris and – on the opera stage – as Geneviève in *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Zurich Opera. Furthermore, Yvonne Naef has been invited to take part as Mrs. Quickly in several performances of Verdi's *Falstaff*, including appearances at the Verbier Festival under Jesús López Cobos, at Milan's La Scala and Kazakhstan's Astana Opera House under Zubin Mehta, as well as with the Budapest Festival Orchestra under Iván Fischer. With Verdi's *Falstaff*, she will also appear at the Mostly Mozart Festival at New York's Lincoln Hall, once again under Iván Fischer and his Budapest Festival Orchestra. In the current season, Yvonne Naef will furthermore take over the roles of Old Lady in Bernstein's *Candide* and Geneviève in Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Grand Théâtre de Genève.

Notable recordings with Yvonne Naef, some of which have received coveted international classical music awards, include Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, Wagner's *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, Othmar Schoeck's *Penthesilea*, Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and Messiaen's *Poèmes pour Mi*. Her solo album featuring orchestral songs by Berlioz and Wagner has been released by the Swiss label claves.

Yvonne Naef has been a lecturer for singing at the Zurich University of the Arts since 2014.

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