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Katherine Drago, mezzo-soprano



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Biography

Mezzo-soprano Katherine Drago recently completed a three-year residency with Pittsburgh Opera where she was consistently praised for her solid singing and sharp characterizations. While in Pittsburgh, she appeared in six productions, highlights of which include Meg Page in Falstaff, Mercedes in Carmen and the Stewardess in Flight. She covered in an additional four productions and performed Romeo in I Capuleti e I Montecchi and Cherubino in Le Nozze di Figaro during student matinee performances as well.

In the summer 2009, as a second-year Apprentice Artist with the Santa Fe Opera, Katherine made her role debut as Zerlina in Don Giovanni after stepping in at the last minute for the final three performances. Also, during the 2008-09 season she debuted with Opera Vivente in the role of Ottavia in The Coronation of Poppea.

Other credits include Marquise de Merteuil/The Dangerous Liaisons and Dinah/Trouble in Tahiti both at CCM; Ruth/Pirates of Penzance (Music by the Lake); Orlofsky/Die Fledermaus (Rising Star Opera Theater); Hansel/Hansel and Gretel (Milwaukee Opera Theater, Opera for the Young).

In addition to being an Apprentice Artist with The Santa Fe Opera (2008, 2009), she was a featured young artist with Chicago Opera Theater, Berkshire Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, and Santa Fe Opera. While with Chicago Opera Theater she debuted on their main stage in the role of Venere in L'Incoronazione di Poppea and sang the role of the French Mother in their critically acclaimed production of Death in Venice.

An active soloist, she most recently debuted with the Acadiana Symphony Orchestra in Lafayette, LA and has also sung with the Lebanon Symphony (OH), Asheville Symphony, Peninsula Music Festival, Cheyenne Symphony, Chatham Baroque, Erie Philharmonic, Berkshire Choral Festival, and an evening of songs by Ricky Ian Gordon with the composer at the piano.

Ms. Drago is the recipient of awards from the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the Bel Canto Foundation, The Santa Fe Opera (Donald S. Graham Memorial Award), and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

A native of Chicago, she holds degrees from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) and Northwestern University. Immediately upon graduating from Northwestern, Ms. Drago toured the United States with the Broadway National Tour of The Phantom of the Opera in which she performed the roles of the Wardrobe Mistress and Confidante. This season's engagements include a concert of music by Ricky Ian Gordon with the Five Boroughs Music Festival in NYC and a return to the Santa Fe Symphony for Handel's Messiah. Upcoming: Title role in La Périchole with Amarillo Opera, Spring 2012.

Critical Acclaim

Rising Stars Concert Pittsburgh Opera

“Katherine Drago gave a delightfully rambunctious delivery of Zerlina’s aria, “Batti, batti.”

-Robert Croan, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette “Classical Musings”

Mercedes Carmen Pittsburgh Opera

“Katherine Drago (Mercedes) and Shannon Kessler Dooley (Frasquita) played Carmen’s confidantes with swagger and attractive timbre of their own.”

-Andrew Druckenbrod, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Bianca The Rape of Lucretia Pittsburgh Opera

“Katherine Drago as Bianca provided deft characterization and sturdy sound.”

-Robert Croan, Opera News Online-Review

Kate Pinkerton Madama Butterfly Pittsburgh Opera

“Kate Pinkerton, affectingly sung and acted by Katherine Drago.”

-Opera Warhorses

“Katherine Drago was a caring Kate Pinkerton.”

-Andrew Druckenbrod, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Stewardess *Flight* Pittsburgh Opera Center

“The optimum cast includes...Jonathan Beyer and Katherine Drago as the Steward and Stewardess, a handsome duo with voices to match their looks. The singers’ English diction is uniformly excellent...There’s not a weak link in this production. It’s by far the best thing the Opera Center has done: an evening of total theater not to be missed.”

-Robert Croan, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Read Full Article

“The Stewardess and Steward are played in their official roles, with just the right touch of excessive cheeriness by Katherine Drago and Jonathan Beyer.”

-Mark Kanny, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review Read Full Article

Ottavia *The Coronation of Poppea* Opera Vivente

“Katherine Drago, as Nero’s out-of-favor wife Ottavia, and Lisa Dodson, as the Ottone-smitten Drusilla, did effective work.”

-Tim Smith, Baltimore Sun-Review

Zulma *L’italiana in Algeri* Pittsburgh Opera

“Two more promising Opera Center participants, Deborah Selig and Katherine Drago, completed the picture neatly as Mustafà’s wife and her slave.”

-Robert Croan, Opera News Online-Review

“...Katherine Drago strong as Zulma, hilarious eunuchs and guards and a precise orchestra under Antony Walker...”

-Andrew Druckenbrod, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Meg Page *Falstaff* Pittsburgh Opera

“The women were an excellent ensemble consisting of Veronica Villarroel as Alice Ford, Katherine Drago as Meg Page, Lindsay Ammann as Dame Quickly and Shannon Kessler Dooley as Nannetta, a young woman in love with Fenton.”

-Mark Kanny, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

“Alice Ford (Veronica Villarroel) and Meg Page (Katherine Drago) led the women in the cast. As actors, the women played off each other with genuine, and genuinely funny, camaraderie.”

-Andrew Druckenbrod, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
(Best Classical Performances of 2009 and Opera News Online)