

MEGAN BERTI, MEZZO SOPRANO

Megan Berti is a Houston-based mezzo-soprano who sings "with flawless technique, perfect diction, absolute pitch and fearless attack" (*Houston Press*). Megan recently returned to Houston Grand Opera to perform Second Bridesmaid in *Le Nozze di Figaro* after previous engagements as Pepita in *Roméo et Juliette*, an immigrant soloist in O'Regan's *The Phoenix*, and Female Emilia in Floyd's *Prince of Players*. Praised for her "warm and plush" tone and coloratura that "sparkles" (*South Florida Classical Review*), Ms Berti's recent role debuts include Hannah Older in Kaminsky's *As One*, the title role of *Carmen*, and Signora Naccarelli in *The Light in the Piazza*. A unique and versatile musician, Ms. Berti is a favorite of living composers and recently performed the Houston premiere of Stephen Bachicha's "Close your eyes" with the Carya Quartet. Her voice can be heard on 2 recordings newly released by Parma's Navona Records: *Kassandra* by Anthony Brandt and *The Leader* by Karim Al-Zand; she premiered both operas with Opera in the Heights in collaboration with MUSIQA in February 2020. A champion of new opera, Megan recently returned to MUSIQA to debut Laura Schwendinger's *Cabaret of Shadows* and was contracted by Concertia for Amanda Martikainen's *A Voice of One's Own*. Ms Berti made her debut with Miami Lyric Opera in 2019 with a highly acclaimed portrayal of Angelina in *La Cenerentola* (Rossini). Earlier that year, she performed Bernard Rands' *Canti Lunatici* with Hear&Now, returned to Cantare con Vivo for Verdi's *Requiem*, and portrayed Dinah in *Trouble in Tahiti* (Bernstein) with Painted Sky Opera. Other performing highlights include Hansel in the Rec Room's *Hansel and Gretel* (Humperdinck), Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri* (Rossini) and Concepción in *L'Heure Espagnole* (Ravel) with Opera-tivo, and Prince Orlovsky in *Die Fledermaus* (J. Strauss) with Opera in the Heights.

A favorite at Opera in the Heights, Megan has performed the title roles in *La Cenerentola* and *Hänsel und Gretel*, Countess Ceprano in *Rigoletto* (Verdi), and Flora in *La traviata* (Verdi). She has also performed with Solo Opera in California as the Sandman and Hansel cover, and with the Lakes Area Music Festival in Minnesota in her first appearance as Angelina. Ms. Berti often appears as a soloist with the BCC&O in California and on their European tours in such works as Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Mozart's *Great Mass in C Minor*, Dvořák's *Requiem*, and Vivaldi's *Gloria*. She has also sung Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with Oakland's Cantare con Vivo, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* with Lee College, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* with Rochester's Gregory Kunde Chorale, Bach's *B Minor Mass* with the Eastman Chorale and Concordia University of Texas, and Beethoven's *9th Symphony* with the Pasadena Pops Orchestra. Megan was a regular performer with Houston Grand Opera's Opera to Go! 2014-2017, touring the greater Houston area as Hansel, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* (Rossini), The Queen, Hilde, and the Dragon in *The Princess and the Pea* (Warwick), Annamaria in *Puffed-Up Prima Donna* (Buller), Annamaria and Aquilia in *Pastry Prince* (Buller), the Mother and Nightingale in *Rapunzel* (Warwick), and the title character in *Strega Nona* (Warwick).

Ms Berti completed her Performance Certificate in 2013 at the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston. While at Moores, Megan portrayed Maddalena in *Rigoletto* (Verdi), Vava in *Moscow, Cheryomushki* (Shostakovich), Magali in *Salsipuedes* (Catán), Annina in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Strauss), the title role of *Amelia* (Hagen), and Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff* (Verdi). She received her Master's degree at the Eastman School of Music where she played Anne in *To Hell and Back* (Heggie) and Dryade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Strauss). During her undergraduate studies at the Cole Conservatory at California State University Long Beach, Ms. Berti performed Sesto in *La clemenza di Tito* (Mozart) and La Messaggiera in *L'Orfeo* (Monteverdi). She was also a soloist in Verdi's *Requiem* and Beethoven's *9th Symphony*.

Megan has participated in the summer programs Opernfest Prague, Opera in the Ozarks, Le Chiavi di Bel Canto, SongFest, the International Lyric Academy in Italy, and SummerSong where she performed the abridged roles of Orpheus in Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice*, Sextus in Handel's *Julius Cesar*, and Otho in Monteverdi's *The Coronation of Poppea*. Ms Berti can be heard performing the premiere of Benjamin Boretz's piece "The Memory of All That: a Holy Sonnet of John Donne for Milton Babbitt" published by Open Space. She earned Honorable Mention at the 2020 Young Texas Artists Music Competition and has received scholarship awards from The National Federation of Music Clubs, the Presser award, the Dramatic Allied Arts Guild, and the Fine Arts Affiliates. Megan is also a member of the SAI music fraternity and the Pi Kappa Lambda Music Honor Society. Ms. Berti is the Artistic Director and Founder of HOPERA, an opera company in Houston focused on supporting local artists while fusing craft music with craft beverages.

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OPERATIC REPERTOIRE

Argento:

Jo, Meg – *Little Women*

Bernstein:

Paquette – *Candide*

Dinah – *Trouble in Tabiti*

Bizet:

Carmen, Mercedes – *Carmen*

Gluck:

Orfeo – *Orfeo ed Euridice*

Gounod:

Siebel – *Faust*

Stéphano – *Roméo et Juliette*

Flotow:

Nancy – *Martha*

Handel:

Ruggiero – *Alcina*

Sesto – *Giulio Cesare*

Rinaldo – *Rinaldo*

Humperdinck:

Hänsel, Sandman – *Hänsel und Gretel*

Kaminsky:

Hannah Older – *As One*

Mozart:

Zerlina – *Don Giovanni*

Dorabella – *Così fan tutte*

Sesto – *La clemenza di Tito*

Cherubino – *La nozze di Figaro*

Offenbach:

Nicklausse – *Les contes d'Hoffmann*

Puts:

Elizabeth – *Elizabeth Cree*

Ravel:

Concepción – *L'heure Espagnol*

Rossini:

Rosina – *Il barbiere di Siviglia*

Angelina – *La Cenerentola*

Isabella – *L'Italiana in Algeri*

Arsace – *Semiramide*

Tancredi – *Tancredi*

Strauss, J.:

Count Orlovsky – *Die Fledermaus*

Strauss, R.:

Componist – *Ariadne auf Naxos*

Octavian, Annina – *Der Rosenkavalier*

Verdi:

Meg, Mistress Quickly – *Falstaff*

Maddalena – *Rigoletto*

Flora – *La traviata*

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ORCHESTRAL/ORATORIO REPERTOIRE

Bach:

Mass in B minor
St John Passion
St Matthew Passion

Beethoven:

9th Symphony
Missa Solemnis

Berg:

Sieben frühe Lieder

Dvořák:

Requiem
Stabat Mater

Handel:

Messiah

Mendelssohn:

Elijah

Mozart:

Coronation Mass
Great Mass in C Minor
Requiem

Pergolesi:

Elizabeth – Stabat Mater

Rossini:

Petite messe solennelle

Verdi:

Requiem

Vivaldi:

Gloria

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CONDUCTORS

Andrew Altenbach
Enrique Careón-Robledo
Thomas Cockrell
Jerry Hau
Gregory Kunde
Charles Hausmann
Eiki Isomura

Alexander Katsman
Eun Sun Kim
Ming Luke
Benjamin Manis
Jan McDaniel
Michael Sakir
Patrick Summers

OPERA HOUSES/THEATERS

Brown Theater, Houston Grand Opera
Carpenter Performing Arts Center
Cullen Theater, Houston Grand Opera
Dvorak Hall
Eastman-Kodak Hall
Lakes Area Music Festival
Lambert Hall, Opera in the Heights
MATCH, MUSIQA
Miami Lyric Opera

Moore's Opera House
Opera in the Ozarks
Operativo
Painted Sky Opera
Pasadena Pops
The Rec Room
Smetana Hall
Solo Opera
Stages

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Angelina in *La Cenerentola* Miami Lyric Opera

South Florida Classical Review

“As the heroine Megan Berti exuded sympathy at her first appearance clad in rags and alone with a mop in the corner of Don Magnifico’s crumbling mansion. When she came to the ball, she was every inch a queen and she commanded the stage at her final triumph. Berti’s light mezzo sparkled in the concluding showpiece “Non più mesta,” her accurate and well-placed trills fully earning the crown placed on her head. Her plea to Don Magnifico to let her come to the ball was replete with pathos, buttressed by a warm and plush lower register.”

El Lugarño

“The mezzo-soprano Megan Berti offered a completely perfect Angelina/Cinderella, both vocally and dramatically, and her transition from a maid to the beautiful, dazzling young woman who again captivated Don Ramiro in the palace...was simply shocking....”

El Nuevo Herald

“Mezzosoprano Megan Berti in the titular roll of Angelina showed signs of agility and control, especially in the ornamented coloraturas of the final aria.”

Witch and Mother in *Hansel and Gretel* The Rec Room

Houston Press

“...if there’s anyone who adds effulgent orchestration it’s Berti, whose showstopping Witch is one of the wonders of the world. In bizarre gypsy garb and Rastafarian blue hair, with a cackle to rival Margaret Hamilton’s, she races around the kitchen, slaps dough on the table, sharpens her cleaver, and cracks eggs with panache. Iron Chef is small potatoes next to her. She’s the opera’s most outrageous character, and Berti, like a vision out of Bosch, cooks on all burners.”

Angelina in *La Cenerentola* Opera in the Heights

Houston Press

“...what’s a Cenerentola without a Cinderella? A revelation two seasons ago at OH as a feisty Hänsel in Humperdinck’s Wagnerian Hänsel and Gretel, who knew Megan Berti could conquer – and triumph – in the dazzling fireworks of Rossini? She exudes that fairy dust I mentioned earlier; she glistens with it, tosses it in the air and envelops us. She holds us spellbound with flawless technique, perfect diction, absolute pitch and fearless attack. Even in her drab scullery uniform, she’s an eye-ful. Wearing haute couture at the ball, she’s a knockout. What a diva! And I mean that in all sincerity. She knocks this role out of the park. After she meets the prince in disguise, she explodes in fiery roulades and filigree, each one more precise, each more ornamented. Her heart’s aflame, and she sounds it, happy in love, ecstatic in joy. So are we, pulled warmly into her vocal embrace. This is a defining performance.”

Opera

“Opera in the Heights tackled comic Rossini with an energetic and well-sung Lambert Hall staging of *La Cenerentola*. Megan Berti was sympathetic in the title role, and her warm mezzo met the coloratura demands nimbly...”

Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel* Opera in the Heights

Houston Press

“The future of opera is in mighty secure hands when the young cast is this assured. Full of charm and exceptional technique, these fine pros sail through Humperdinck’s Wagnerian tessitura as if laughing.”

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Elijah with Berkeley Community Chorus & Orchestra

repeat performances

"Yet another pillar of Friday's performance was mezzo-soprano Megan Berti, whose agile voice and buttery colors balanced the strings in her solos. She had the clarity and heft of Handel's passionate Dido, combined with a svelte touch of German Lieder."

Missa Solemnis with Cantare con Vivo

San Francisco Classical Voice

"The alto soloist, Megan Berti, who showed herself to be a little closer to the angels all evening, extended the plea for mercy to over 25 notes."

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