

MARIA KATZARAVA

The lyric soprano Maria Katzarava was born in Mexico City in the year 1984.

She was raised in a bicultural family by a georgian father, Archil Katzarava, and a mexican mother, Velia Hernández. Both of her parents are professional violinists who taught the soprano into that instrument at the age of three. Years later, Maria was taught piano, and this is how she became keen on both instruments.

BIOGRAPHY:

First years

At the age of fifteen the lyric soprano fell for opera and started private singing lessons, and at the age of seventeen began her formal vocal studies at the Superior School of Music in Mexico City.

The soprano also attended the Lycée Franco- Mexicain which made her fluent in french. She is a spanish native speaker who is also fluent in russian according to her father's heritage. Katzarava is also keen on italian and english thanks to her further studies.

In the year 2008 she became a member of the Los Angeles Opera's Domingo-Thornton Young Artists Program. As the recipient of the Ramón Vargas-Pro Opera scholarship for distinguished young singers, she studied with Maestro Gabriel Mijares as well as with Mr. Vargas, and has appeared with the famed tenor in Mexico City's Nezahualcōyotl Hall with the Minería Symphony Orchestra, and again at the Palacio de Bellas Artes with the Opera Symphony Orchestra.

Katzarava has also sung with world known tenor Plácido Domingo in the year 2009, who also conducted her at the 'Operalia World Competition' in 2008, and again in the year 2014 next to Andrea Bocelli, with whom she shared two concerts in Italy and Estonia this past summer.

Maria Katzarava made her debut in 2006 in Mexico City at the Palacio de Bellas Artes, in the role of Stéphanie in Gounod's Roméo et Juliette, featuring Rolando Villazón and Anna Netrebko.

2010 present

The soprano made her european debut as Juliette in St. Etienne, France, in 2009, and in that same year she sang her first performances of Gilda in Verdi's Rigoletto with the Teatro Regio of Parma on their tour to China first, and afterwards in Mexico. Other past engagements include her debut at the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples as Valencienne in The Merry Widow.

The role of Juliette in Gounod's Roméo et Juliette played a significant role in Maria Katzarava's first stages of her career. In the 2010-2011 season, Katzarava made her debut in this role at the Royal Opera House -Covent Garden-, in performances conducted by Daniel Oren and subsequently made her debut with this same role at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Opéra de Lausanne, Florida Grand Opera, Teatro Filarmonico in Verona, St. Etienne, and her further and outstanding debut in the Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow.

Other important roles that distinguished Katzarava in the beginning of her career are Puccini's Musetta; Bellini's Amina; Beethoven's Marzelline and Donizetti's Lucia, among others.

Later on, and as a natural development of her lyrical voice, Maria Katzarava sang the first Violetta of her career at the Grand Théâtre de Genève in 2013. She was hailed as a brilliant new discovery in the role. In the spring of 2013 she returned to the Florida Grand Opera for their production of La Traviata. During the 2012/2013 season Katzarava also made her debut at the Teatro Petruzzelli in

Bari as Isabella in Daniel Auber's rarely performed masterpiece *La Muette de Portici*. In July of 2013 she debuted at the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari singing her first Suzel in Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz*. She also joined the Teatro alla Scala on their tour to Japan where she sang Gilda in Verdi's *Rigoletto*.

Engagements for the 2013/2014 season included outstanding debuts in roles like Nedda in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* at the Fondazione Sinfonica Petruzzelli in Bari; Manon in Massenet's opera at Palacio de Bellas Artes; an outrageous debut as Liù in Puccini's *Turandot* at Teatro Lirico di Cagliari and an extraordinary Mimì in Puccini's *La Bohème*, all of which have become her latest signature roles.

Maria Katzarava's agenda in 2015 included her brilliant debuts in the roles of Antonia, Giulietta and Stella in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* by Offenbach in Piacenza, Modena and Reggio Emilia; her debut in the Teatro Manzoni in Bologna with R. Strauss's *Four last songs*, conducted by Michele Mariotti; her debut as Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen* at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa; Verdi's *La Traviata* at the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico; her return to the role of Liù in Puccini's *Turandot*, at the Terme di Caracalla; a concert with Andrea Bocelli in Florence conducted by Zubin Mehta; Verdi's *Requiem* conducted by Plácido Domingo in México DC; *Fidelio*, by Beethoven, at the Opera Carolina (USA); a concert alongside Plácido Domingo to celebrate the 55th anniversary of the Spanish singer's debut in Mexico; her debut in Spain with Donizetti's *Il Duca d'Alba* at the Oviedo Opera and her first *Violetta (La Traviata)* in Italy at the Teatro Verdi in Padua; in 2016 has debuted at Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona with her first *Desdemona* in Verdi's *Otello*, has sung Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen* at Teatro Comunale in Bologna and has travelled to Moscow for a one-off performance with Zubin Mehta

Upcoming presentations

Her upcoming engagements include a tour with the popular tenor Andrea Bocelli which will take the young soprano to Bombay (India, also with Zubin Mehta conducting before an audience of 80,000 people at a concert which celebrates Mehta's 80th Birthday), Abu Dhabi, Manila, Tokyo and Seoul; her debut at Musikverein in Vienna alongside Juan Diego Flórez; her first Marguerite in *Fausto*, by Gounod, in Lausanne; Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* at the Saint Denis Festival with the Radio France Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Michele Mariotti; a tour in Mexico with *La voix humaine*, by Poulenc; her debut at Festival de Peralada (Spain) as Liù in Puccini's *Turandot* and her debut as Cio-Cio San in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo.

Awards and honors.

Maria Katzarava won her first opera award at the age of eighteen, being honored with the most important national competitions in Mexico such as the "Maritza Alemán Award" and the "Carlo Morelli Award".

Afterwards, the soprano came to international attention when she won in 2008 the "First Prize" and the "Zarzuela Prize" at the "Plácido Domingo Operalia World Competition". She was also honored with other major awards like the "Carlo Bergonzi Prize" at the Francisco Viñas International Competition; the "Oscar della Lirica" at Arena di Verona in 2010 and she was recently awarded at the "Miami Life Awards" as "Best Female Singer of 2014".