Layla Claire

Soprano

Canadian soprano Layla Claire, who is frequently praised for a colourful, flexible voice and a graceful stage presence, further expanded her repertoire last season with a highly successful role debut as Handel’s Alcina at Karlsruhe Händel-Festspiele, conducted by Andreas Spering. Alcina marked Claire’s return to Karlsruhe after her first foray into Handel there in 2015, as Tusnelda (*Arminio*), which brought her universal acclaim as “a wonderful discovery” (*Der Neue Merkur*), and now released commercially by Decca Classics.

Layla Claire was a member of the Metropolitan Opera’s Lindemann Program, making her debut there as Tebaldo (*Don Carlo*) under Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Claire has since returned to The Met’s stage for several guest appearances including the creation of the role of Helena in the Baroque pastiche *The Enchanted Island* under William Christie (available on Virgin Classics DVD) and as Anne Trulove (*The Rake’s Progress*). In recent seasons, Claire has appeared as the Governess in Willy Decker’s new production of Britten’s *The Turn of the Screw* at Opernhaus Zürich, as Helena in Robert Carsen’s classic production of Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* at Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, as Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) at the 2016 Salzburger Festpiele under Alain Altinoglu, and in a highly-acclaimed Washington National Opera debut as Blanche de la Force in Francesca Zambello’s new production of *Dialogues des Carmélites*.

In 2012, the Europe-wide ARTE broadcast of Layla Claire’s performance as Sandrina (*La finta giardiniera*) from the Aix-en-Provence Festival brought her to immediate European attention and led to her debut at the Glyndebourne Festival as Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*). In addition to her first Fiordiligi (*Cosi fan tutte*) for Canadian Opera Company, Layla has appeared at both Pittsburgh and Minnesota Operas as Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), at the Tanglewood Festival as Donna Anna and Fiordiligi, as Contessa Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) at Opera Philadelphia and, again as Donna Elvira, at Opernhaus Zürich, Opéra de Montréal, and in concert performances with Jakub Hrůša and the Bamberger Symphoniker, in Bamberg and at the Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg.

An expressive and diverse concert singer, Claire has twice collaborated with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Mahler’s Symphony No.2 under Michael Tilson Thomas, and again in Mendelssohn’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* under Bernard Haitink. With Yannick Nézet-Séguin, she has performed both Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis* and Symphony No.9 at Festival de Lanaudière, as well as Dvořák’s *Stabat Mater* with L’Orchestre Métropolitain. At Lincoln Center’s Mostly Mozart Festival she appeared in Beethoven’s Mass in C Major with Louis Langrée, and both Dvořák’s *Requiem* and Haydn’s *Die Jahreszeiten* at Grant Park Music Festival under Carlos Kalmar.

Layla Claire has previously been honoured with the Prix des Amis d’Aix-en-Provence for best Mozart performance, as well as the Mozart Prize at the Wilhelm Stenhammar International Competition, and released her debut solo album, entitled *Songbird*, with ATMA Classique in 2017.

In the current season, Layla Claire makes her debut appearances at Munich’s Bayerische Staatsoper as Donna Elvira under James Gaffigan, and takes on the challenge of portraying the role of Catherine Earnshaw in Bernard Hermann’s *Wuthering Heights* for Opéra National de Nancy et Lorraine. On the concert platform, she joins Orchestre national de Lille and Musical Director Alexandre Bloch as Micaëla (*Carmen*) and Boston Baroque for Handel’s *Messiah* under Martin Pearlman.

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