Miina-Liisa Värelä
soprano

Soprano Miina-Liisa Värelä has undeniably left an indelible mark on the operatic landscape, showcased in a series of acclaimed recent performances. Her portrayal of Isolde in Wagner’s monumental *Tristan und Isolde* with Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra under Gustavo Dudamel left a lasting impression and as Strauss’ *Ariadne auf Naxos*, conducted by Josep Pons, at Barcelona’s Gran Teatre del Liceu she received unanimous critical acclaim. In a further display of exceptional artistry, Värelä “enchants with her lyrical timbre and dramatic abundance” as Die Färberin in Lydia Steier’s new staging of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the renowned Festspielhaus in Baden-Baden with conductor Kirill Petrenko and Berlin Philharmoniker.

Miina-Liisa Värelä’s 2023/24 season sees her debut as Leonore in Beethoven’s *Fidelio* at Canadian Opera Company under Johannes Debus, she joins another new production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, this time by David Bösch at Semperoper Dresden with renowned conductor Christian Thielemann and returns to Glyndebourne Festival Opera for *Tristan und Isolde*, led by Music Director Robin Ticciati. On the concert platform, she sings Verdi’s Requiem with Vancouver Symphony Orchestra under Music Director Otto Tausk.

Hailed recently as one of the most promising sopranos in the dramatic field by respected *Opernmagazin*, Värelä’s wider production experience includes a regular collaboration with Finnish National Opera and its Chief Conductor Hannu Lintu including as Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*, Senta in *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Katie Mitchell’s esteemed production and, most recently, a debut as Puccini’s *Turandot*. As Die Färberin, Värelä has further appeared at both Oper Frankfurt and Bayerische Staatsoper under Sebastian Weigle, and at the Verbier Festival with Valery Gergiev. The Savonlinna Festival was the setting for Värelä’s role debut as Puccini’s *Tosca*, conducted by Carlo Montanaro, she sang Ortrud in Wagner’s *Lohengrin* with both Salzburg Landestheater and Oper Frankfurt and portrayed the title role in Strauss’ *Elektra* at Landestheater Linz. As part of the 2021 BBC Proms, Miina-Liisa sang Isolde with Glyndebourne Festival Opera under Robin Ticciati at London’s Royal Albert Hall, broadcast live on BBC Radio 3.

A regular concert performer, Värelä made her American debut in Ravel’s *Shéhérazade* with Seattle Symphony Orchestra conducted by Aziz Shokhakimov, she performed Shostakovich’s Symphony No.14 with hr-Sinfonieorchester  under Klaus Mäkelä and Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne under Hannu Lintu and joined Hans Graf and Odense Symphony Orchestra in Strauss’ *Vier letzte Lieder.* Under Hannu Lintu, she has performed Boulanger’s *Faust et Hélène* and Shostakovich’s *From Jewish Folk Poetry* with Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Mahler’s Symphony No.4 with Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra. With Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Ingo Metzmacher, she has performed Mahler’s Symphony No.2, a programme of Sibelius Songs with Philharmonia Orchestra at the Mikkeli Music Festival under Erkki Lasonpalo and with Stavanger Symphony Orchestra and Andris Poga, Sieglinde in Act 1 of *Die Walküre*, recorded for TV broadcast.

A native of Finland, Värelä is a graduate of Helsinki’s renowned Sibelius Academy and has taken prizes in numerous competitions including at Lappeenranta and Belvedere.