

Jennifer Johnston

Mezzo-soprano

Esteemed mezzo-soprano Jennifer Johnston is recognised as one of the most important voices of her generation and celebrated for her performances of works by Mahler, Wagner, Britten, Beethoven, Schumann and Elgar among others. She was awarded Royal Philharmonic Society’s Singer Award in 2021 in recognition of her “commitment and emotional force” to both performance and education.

Johnston’s formidable reputation as a preeminent interpreter of Mahler is reflected in a 2024/25 season which features his works prominently. Jennifer sings Mahler’s Symphony No.8 with Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra under Klaus Mäkelä, Prague Philharmonic Orchestra under Semyon Bychkov, Bremer Philharmoniker under Marko Letonja, and with London Philharmonic Orchestra under Edward Gardner; Mahler’s Symphony No.3 with Cleveland Orchestra under Klaus Mäkelä and with Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra under Domingo Hindoyan; Mahler’s Symphony No.2 with Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège under Gergely Madaras; and Mahler’s *Das Lied von der Erde* with Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra under Juraj Valčuha. Other highlights include Haydn’s Nelson Mass with BBC Symphony Orchestra under Hannu Lintu, Beethoven’s Symphony No.9 with City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Kazuki Yamada, and Mendelssohn’s *Lobgesang* with Sinfonieorchester Basel under Ivor Bolton.

On the operatic stage, Jennifer Johnston has enjoyed a close collaboration with Bayerische Staatsoper and returns this season as Brigitta in Simon Stone’s production of *Die tote Stadt* under Lothar Koenigs. In Munich Johnston has sung over 80 performances including as Mrs Sedley (*Peter Grimes*), Second Norn (*Götterdämmerung*), Roßweise (*Die Walküre*), Floßhilde (*Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*), Hedwige (*Guillaume Tell*) and La Ciesca (*Gianni Schicci*). Highlights elsewhere have included Johnston’s critically acclaimed Judith (*Bluebeard’s Castle*) for English National Opera, Juno (*Semele*) for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Mrs Grose (*The Turn of the Screw*) and Gaia (Battistelli’s *CO2*) at Teatro alla Scala, Carmi (Mozart’s *La Betulia Liberata*) and Leda (*Die Liebe Der Danae*) at Salzburg Festival, and Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*) for Festival d’Aix-en-Provence.

In huge demand on the concert platform, Jennifer Johnston has collaborated with many of the world’s leading orchestras and conductors and enjoys a special relationship with the orchestra of her home town, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, where she has been Artist in Residence and with whom she recorded her first solo recording, A Love Letter to Liverpool (Rubicon Classics). Recent highlights have included Judith (*Bluebeard’s Castle*) with Oslo Filharmonien under Klaus Mäkelä, Ravel’s Schéhérazade with BBC Symphony Orchestra under Sakari Oramo, Mahler’s Symphony No.8 with Wiener Philharmoniker under Franz Welser-Möst, Bayerisches Staatsorchester under Kirill Petrenko, and with NDR Radio Philharmonic Orchestra under Semyon Bychkov, Jocasta in Stravinsky’s *Oedipus Rex* under Sir John Eliot Gardiner with both Berliner Philharmoniker and London Symphony Orchestra, Wagner’s Wesendonck Lieder with Hallé Orchestra under Gergely Madaras, Verdi’s Messa da Requiem with BBC Symphony Orchestra and Sakari Oramo as part of the First Night of the BBC Proms, Schumann’s Faustszenen with Daniel Harding and Gewandhausorchester, and Britten’s Phaedra with Martyn Brabbins and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

A former BBC New Generation Artist, and a graduate of Cambridge University and the Royal College of Music, Jennifer Johnston has an extensive discography including the Grammy-nominated Vaughan Williams’s Four Last Songs (Albion Records), Stravinsky’s Oedipus Rex (LSO Live), Wagner’s Die Walküre (Waltraute) with Sir Simon Rattle and Bayerischer Rundfunk Orchester and, Gramophone Awards’ 2022 Recording of the Year, Korngold’s Die tote Stadt from Bayerische Staatsoper.