



SAMANTHA HANKEY

Praised as “luscious,” “distinctive,” and “vividly dramatic” by Opera News, American mezzo-soprano Samantha Hankey is quickly establishing a name for herself across the United States and abroad.

Highlights of 2021-22 include opening the season of the Gran Teatre del Liceu Opera Barcelona in her role debut as *Der Komponist Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Dorabella Così fan tutte* at San Diego Opera, *Varvara Kát'a Kabanová* with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karina Canellakis, and Glyndebourne Festival in her first festival appearance as *Ruggiero Alcina*. Samantha returns to The Metropolitan Opera for the beloved holiday tradition production of *Cinderella* in December and performs recitals at Alice Tully Hall featuring pianist Brian Zeger and at the Wigmore Hall with Malcolm Martineau. Samantha returns to the Bayerische Staatsoper for Cherubino *Le nozze di Figaro* and reprises the role of Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, which she debuted to critical acclaim in the 2020-21 season in the eagerly anticipated new production of Barrie Kosky, conducted by Vladimir Jurowski.

Alongside *Der Rosenkavalier*, Samantha made other notable appearances during her residency at the Bayerische Staatsoper as Hänsel *Hänsel und Gretel*, Wellgunde *Das Rheingold*, Zweite Dame *Die Zauberflöte*, and as Carmen in Marina Abramović's new production of *7 Deaths of Maria Callas* at the Opernfestspiele.

Other recent significant role and house debuts include Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Opernhaus Zürich), Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Den Norske Opera), Zweite Dame (The Dallas Opera) and Siébel in *Faust* (Grand Théâtre de Genève). In addition, Samantha made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Pantalís in *Mefistofele*, and returned to the Met for *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Carmen*, *Das Rheingold*, *Götterdämmerung*, and *Rigoletto*, debuting a myriad of named roles within a single season at the Met. On the concert stage, Samantha performed the title role in Handel's *Agrippina* in concert with Il Pomo d'Oro in Turku, Finland, where she was praised by Turun Sanomat for her “marvelously rich mezzo.”

Equally at home in classic repertoire and new music, Samantha took part in Ricky Ian Gordon's *Intimate Apparel*, in association with the Metropolitan Opera and Lincoln Center Theatre, and has been involved in numerous world premieres including productions with Opera Philadelphia and the Met. She has a longstanding relationship with composer David Herzberg with whom she co-developed the title role in *The Rose Elf* as well as The Fairy Prince in *The Wake World*, both of which received considerable praise through multiple workshops, premieres, and CD recordings.

Samantha's growing career includes awards in a vast number of national and international competitions. In 2018, she won both First Prize and the Media Prize at the Inaugural Glyndebourne Cup. The Arts Desk wrote of her victory: "Polished, golden of tone, and convincing.... She has a natural charisma, centering on the voice itself...allowing her unfailing musicality to shine through." That same year, she took home multiple prizes at Placido Domingo's Operalia Competition, winning top awards in the general division as well as the Birgit Nilsson Prize for her interpretation of the work of Richard Strauss. In 2018, Samantha also received a Career Grant from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation, following an earlier 2016 award of a Sara Tucker Study Grant. In 2017, she was named a Grand Finals Winner by the Metropolitan Opera National Council, took First Prize in the Dallas Opera Guild Vocal Competition, and received a Leonore Annenberg Arts Fellowship in that foundation's final year.

In addition to her stage performances, Samantha is an accomplished recital and concert artist. In 2017, she made her Carnegie Hall debut in Handel's *Messiah* with Musica Sacra and performed Rossini's *Stabat Mater* in North Carolina. Prior to that, Samantha was heard at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall in "Juilliard Songfest: Songs of Richard Strauss," curated by Brian Zeger, as well as a program of Liszt, Schumann, and Strauss songs that she presented as winner of the Vocal Arts Honors Recital. Her voice has also been heard on the radio, including broadcasts from PlayRTS, BR-Klassik, WQXR, and NPR. In 2012, Samantha was featured in HBO's documentary *A YoungArts Master Class* with renowned soprano Renée Fleming.

Samantha is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where she received both her Bachelor and Master of Music degrees. While there, Samantha performed in no fewer than six productions; her highlighted roles included Diana in *La Calisto*, Varvara in *Katya Kabanova*, and the title role in *Agrippina*, of which Musical America wrote, "Samantha Hankey sang Agrippina in a lustrous, commanding mezzo soprano." Samantha's academic and vocal accomplishments at Juilliard were recognized with several distinctions, including the Peter Mennin Prize for Outstanding Achievement and Leadership in Music and the Juilliard Kovner Fellowship. During her training, Samantha also participated in several summer programs, such as The Internationale Meistersinger Akademie, Houston Grand Opera's Young Artist Vocal Academy, and The Aspen Music Festival.

A native of Marshfield, Massachusetts, Samantha embraced her passion for music from an early age after performing in a local production of *Annie* at age six. She sang with the Boston Children's Chorus for several years as a youth, attended the distinguished Walnut Hill School for the Arts, and pursued pre-college vocal training at the Longy School of Music and the New England Conservatory. In April 2018, Samantha was thrilled to return to her roots with Boston Children's Chorus by joining them at Carnegie Hall for their 15th anniversary concert.

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