

Barbara Hendricks

Barbara Hendricks was born in Arkansas, USA and received her musical training and her Bachelor of Music at the Juilliard School of Music in New York where she studied with mezzo-soprano Jennie Tourel. Earlier, she had completed her studies at the University of Nebraska receiving the degree of Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Chemistry at the age of 20.

She made her American and European operatic debuts in 1974 at the San Francisco Opera and at the Glyndebourne Festival and went on to appear at all major opera houses throughout the world, including the Paris Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, Covent Garden and La Scala. Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* was her debut role in Berlin, Vienna, Hamburg and Munich, as well as the role she sang in the last performances that the late Karl Böhm conducted. Barbara Hendricks has more than 20 roles in her active opera repertoire, 12 of which she has already recorded. They range from Mozart (Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* and Ilia in *Idomeneo*) to French classics (Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffman*, Micaela in Bizet's *Carmen*, Massenet's *Manon* and Gounod's *Juliette*, Debussy's *Mélisande*), and the Italian masterpieces (Liù in *Turandot* and Gilda in *Rigoletto*). She sang 'Liu' in the historical premiere performance of *Turandot*, given in the Forbidden City in Beijing in 1998, conducted by Zubin Mehta and directed by Zhang Yimou. In March 2000 she added Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin* at the Nice Opera with Vladimir Chernov. She made her film debut as Mimi in *La Bohème*, directed by Luigi Comencini. In 1994 she participated in an international prize-winning film production of *The Rake's Progress* singing Anne Truelove, conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen. She was a member of the jury at the International Film Festival in Cannes 1999, presided by David Cronenberg.

Since her 1974 New York Town Hall debut, Barbara Hendricks has been acclaimed as one of the leading and most active recitalists of her generation and in addition to her vast repertoire of German Lieder she is also known as a leading interpreter and staunch promoter of French, American and Scandinavian music. The pianists with whom she has performed and recorded include Dmitri Alexeev, Michel Béroff, Yefim Bronfman, Michel Dalberto, Youri Egorov, Ralf Gothoni, Radu Lupu, Maria Joao Pires, Roland Pöntinen, Staffan Scheja, Andras Schiff and Peter Serkin. Because of her love for chamber music, she regularly participates in and also organises chamber music festivals with friends who share her passion. Barbara Hendricks has performed her extensive orchestral repertoire with all of the leading conductors and orchestras of our time. She is one of today's best-selling recording artists and has made more than 80 recordings with conductors such as Barenboim, Bernstein, Davis, Dorati, Giulini, Haitink, Karajan, Maazel, Mehta, Sawallisch and Solti. For nearly twenty years her solo recordings have been made exclusively for EMI CLASSICS.

She made her jazz debut at the Montreux Jazz Festival in 1994 and has since then performed regularly in renowned jazz festivals throughout the world. Barbara Hendricks has toured Japan with von Karajan (1977), Bernstein (1985), with the Vienna State Opera (1986) and the Hamburg Opera (1996). In addition to her busy concert and opera schedule in Europe and in the United States, she alternates every other year with extensive tours to the Far East or Latin America and performs regularly at international music festivals worldwide.

In 1974, she sang the American premiere of Gilbert Amy's *Un Espace Déployé* with the Chicago Symphony and Sir Georg Solti, who invited her back for the world premiere of the American Bicentennial Commission of David Del Tredici's *Final Alice*, which she subsequently performed with the Boston, Philadelphia and Cleveland Symphonies, and the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonic

Orchestras. She sang the American premiere of the 'Dies Irae' of Penderecki in 1976 with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Zubin Mehta. She gave the world premiere of Tobias Picker's *The Rain in the Trees* with Lorin Maazel and the Pittsburgh Symphony in 1996; as a special guest of Lord Menuhin, she premiered works by five internationally known composers, dedicated to Lord Menuhin for his 80th Birthday Celebration at the closing concert of the Lincoln Center Music Festival; and in 1997, the world premiere in Japan of songs by young Japanese composer Mari Takano. In 2000 she performed Sven-David Sandström's *Mölna Elegy* commissioned for her by the Gotland Chamber Festival. She performed in 2002 the world premiere of Bruno Mantovani's *Das erschafft der Dichter nicht* commissioned for her by the Ensemble Intercontemporain of Paris. In 2004 she premiered Arvo Pärt's *l'Abbé Agathon* for eight cellos commissioned for her by the Festival L'Ensembles de Violoncelles in France. At the end of 2004 she will sing the part of The Angel in the world premiere of Peter Eötvös's opera, "Angel" based on the Tony Kushner play "Angels in America" at the Châtelet Theatre, Paris.

After more than 15 years of service to the cause of refugees and her untiring support for the UNHCR she has been named Honorary Ambassador For Life by the UNHCR and will be given special tasks that demand her long unparalleled experience and commitment. At the end of 1991 and 1993, she gave two solidarity concerts in war-ridden former Yugoslavia (Dubrovnik and Sarajevo). In 1998 she founded the Barbara Hendricks Foundation for Peace and Reconciliation to personalise her struggle for the prevention of conflicts in the world and to facilitate reconciliation and enduring peace where conflicts have already occurred. In 2001, at the special request of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Kofi Annan, she sang for the Nobel Prize ceremony and gala concert in Oslo, and in May 2002 for the East Timor Independence Day Ceremony.

She has received numerous awards for her artistic achievements and humanitarian work: Doctorat Honoris Causa from the University of Louvain in Belgium (1990), Doctor in Law from the University of Dundee in Scotland (1992), Doctor of Music from the Nebraska Wesleyan University (1988), and Doctorat Honoris Causa from the University of Grenoble in France (1996). Honorary Doctor of Music from the Juilliard School of Music in New York (2000). Since 1990, she has been a Member of the Swedish Academy of Music. In 1986, the French government made Barbara Hendricks a Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres, and in 1992, she was awarded the rank of Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur by President François Mitterrand. The Prince of Asturias Foundation Award for the Arts 2000 (Spain) for her advocacy for Human Rights and for the contribution of her artistic work to mankind's cultural heritage. In 2001 she received the Lions Club International Award to encourage the actions of her foundation. In 2004 she received the Premio Internacional Xifra Heras, from the University of Gerona, Spain, for her defence of the values of humanity, honesty and humility.

She has lived in Europe since 1977, is a Swedish citizen and the proud mother of a teenage son and daughter. www.barbarahendricks.com