



**HELENA JUNTUNEN**  
**Sopran**

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Soprano Helena Juntunen has already demonstrated that she is among the elite in traditional bel canto, but her vocal acrobatics in the opera „The Ladies Room“ were nothing short of astounding. An unfailing clarity of tone and beautifully expanding high notes combined with the ever changing timbre and expression of her sound that were as fast as lightning proved not only her ability to live the role, but also her steel-perfect technique.

Composer Perttu Haapanen's feature concert, Ensemble Avanti!, Helsingin Sanomat

Helena Juntunen is one of Finland's most dazzling sopranos, leading both a national and international career. Her beautiful soprano voice enraptures audiences with its freshness, and her phrasing is praised for its expressive and natural quality. Helenas career in Finland was established through winning many competitions, the most important being the Lappeenranta Singing Competition in 2002 and 2006.

Helena Juntunen started her vocal studies at the age of 15 at the Oulu Conservatoire with Airi Tokola and graduated as a Master of Music from the Sibelius Academy, where her teacher was Anita Vällki.

Helena Juntunen has been a regular performer at the Finnish National Opera since 1999. But it was with the role of Marguerite in Gounods Faust at the Savonlinna Opera Festival in 2002 where she had her professional breakthrough. Followed her US-debut with the Connecticut Opera in the 2003-2004 season with the same role. Other debuts in this period include Madame Cortese in Rossinis Il viaggio a Reims in Genova, Zdenka in Strauss' Arabella in Antwerp, and Pamina in The Magic Flute at the State Opera Dresden. Helena also gave her debut concert at New Yorks Carnegie Hall in October 2003, followed by her first appearance in Tokyo.

After adding roles like Liu (Turandot) and Sophie (Rosenkavalier) to her repertoire, she made a brilliant debut with the Vienna Festival as Pamina, a role which she also sang in Brussels, Nancy, Minnesota, Caen, Vienna, Aix-en-Provence and Geneva.

In the following years she performed roles like The Countess (Le Nozze di Figaro) and Donna Elvira (Don Giovanni) at the Opera national de Lyon, Tatjana (Eugen Onegin) in Wasa, Marie (Wozzeck) in Nice, Jenny

(Mahagonny), Donna Clara (The Dwarf by Zemlinsky) and Marietta (Die Tote Stadt by Korngold) in Nancy and Mimi (Helsinki) for the first time.

In 2012 Helena Juntunen received particular acclaim for her interpretation of the role of Grete in Schreker's Der ferne Klang at her debut with Strasbourg's Opera national du Rhin, but also for her Nedda with Finnish National Opera in 2014. In Savonlinna she made a remarkable debut as Cio-Cio-San (Madama Butterfly) in the same summer.

Juntunen's concert repertoire highlights include Mendelssohn's A Midsummer Nights Dream (Lucerne Festival with Vladimir Jurowski), Beethoven's Missa Solemnis, Strauss' Vier letzte Lieder (Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Leif Segerstam). Her performance of Brahms' Ein deutsches Requiem brought her debut with the Berliner Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Donald Runnicles.

Helena Juntunen's particular attachment to the music of her native country does not only show in numerous appearances in concerts with Finnish orchestras and conductors such as Esa-Pekka Salonen, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Leif Segerstam, Osmo Vänskä, Mikko Franck and Hannu Lintu, but also in a number of world premieres of Finnish operas and recordings of Finnish music, such as complete recordings of Einojuhani Rautavaaras operas Aleksis Kivi and Auringon talo, for example.

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