



KAREN KANAKIS, SOPRANO

Soprano **Karen Kanakis** is hailed for her fine vocal technique and dramatic flair. “Her voice and her stage presence are a delight,” wrote a critic of her performance as Sybil in the world premiere of Hans Schaeuble’s *Dorian Gray*. Kanakis’ bright-timbered powerful voice conveys rich emotion, displays brilliant agility, and soars to a thrilling high extension, making her ideal in both the *bel canto* repertoire and that of the Italian spinto soprano, particularly Verdi.

Kanakis’ operatic credits include Abigaille in *Nabucco*, Giorgetta in *Il Tabarro*, Alice Ford in *Falstaff*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Countess Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, and Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*. Though she began her career singing lighter repertoire, Ms. Kanakis’ voice is now most at home in fuller soprano roles such as Tosca, Leonora (*Trovatore* and *La forza del destino*), Aïda, Cio-Cio-San, Ellen Orford, Elisabeth (*Tannhäuser*), Agathe, and Donizetti’s Three Queens.

Ms. Kanakis has been a featured soloist with symphony organizations performing the Verdi *Requiem*, Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, Brahms’ *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Haydn’s *Lord Nelson Mass*, Handel’s *Messiah*, both the Mozart and Fauré *Requiem*, and Orff’s *Carmina Burana*. She is a frequently sought-after solo recitalist, and in 2008 she made her Carnegie Hall debut in the Weill Recital Hall alongside her husband, baritone Jacob Lassetter. A frequent performer of modern compositions, she was Ingram in Eric Chasalow’s *The Puzzlemaster* and can be heard on American composer Brooke Joyce’s CD “Waves of Stone” on the Innova label.

A regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Ms. Kanakis performed as an Apprentice Artist with both the Des Moines Metro Opera and the Utah Festival Opera Company, where she was a featured soloist on many orchestral concerts and on a “Music and the Spoken Word” television broadcast performing “Hear ye, Israel” from *Elijah* at the Salt Lake City Mormon Tabernacle. She was a featured performer during the Bassi Brugnattelli Symposium in Robbiate, Italy, in the summers of 2016-2017 performing the soprano solos in Mendelssohn’s *Elijah* and concerts of operatic excerpts.



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OPERATIC REPERTOIRE

BELLINI:

Norma – Norma
Elvira- I Puritani

BEETHOVEN:

Leonore – Fidelio

BRITTEN:

Lady Billows – Albert Herring
Ellen Orford – Peter Grimes
Governess, Miss Jessel – The Turn of the Screw

DONIZETTI:

Anna Bolena – Anna Bolena
Maria Stuarda – Maria Stuarda
Elisabetta – Roberto Devereux

LEHAR:

Hannah – Die Lustige Witwe

MOZART:

Flordiligi – Così Fan Tutte
Donna Anna, Donna Elvira – Don Giovanni
Elettra – Idomeneo
Countess Almaviva – Le Nozze di Figaro

PUCCINI:

Cio-Cio San – Madama Butterfly
Giorgetta – Il Tabarro
Floria Tosca – Tosca
Turandot – Turandot

J. STRAUSS:

Rosalinde – Die Fiedermaus

R. STRAUSS:

Ariadne – Ariadne auf Naxos
Die Kaiserin – Die Frau ohne Schatten
Chrysothemis – Elektra

VERDI:

Aïda - Aïda
Amelia – Un ballo in Maschera
Elvira – Ernani
*Alice Ford – Falstaff
Leonara – La Forza del Destino
Luisa – Luisa Miller
Lady Macbeth – Macbeth
Abigaille – Nabucco
Violetta – La Traviata
Leonora – Il Trovatore
Elena – I Vespri Siciliani

WAGNER:

Senta – Der Fliegenda Holländer
Elsa – Lohengrin
Eva – Die Meistersinger
Freia – Das Rheingold
Elisabeth – Tannhäuser
Sienglinde – Die Walküre

WEBER:

Agathe – Der Freishütz



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ORCHESTRAL/ORATORIO REPERTOIRE

BEETHOVEN:

Ah, perfido! Op. 65
Symphony no. 9

BERG:

Sieben Frühe Lieder

BERNSTEIN:

Symphony no. 3

BRAHMS:

Ein Deutsches Requiem

BRITTEN:

Les Illuminations de Rimbaud
War Requiem

HAYDN:

Lord Nelson Mass

MAHLER:

Symphonies No. 2, 4, and 8

MENDELSSOHN:

Elijah

MOZART:

Exsultate, Jubilate!
Requiem

ORFF:

Carmina Burana

ROSSINI:

Stabat Mater

R. STRAUSS:

Vier letza Lieder

VERDI:

Requiem

WAGNER:

Wesendonck Lieder



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CONDUCTORS

Robert Larson
Michael Borowitz
Karen Keltner
Gerald Steichen
Barbara Day Turner
James Caraher
Ron Spigelman
Eric McIntyre

Simon Carrington
Rick Kvam
Michael Culloton
Richard Severing
Craig Arnold
Allen Hightower
Stephen Dubberly
Jan McDaniel

REVIEWS

“Karen Kanakis, the soprano who sang the role of Dorian’s love interest, Sibyl Vane, got too little stage time. Her voice and her stage presence are a delight, and her performance cast Sibyl as a thinking young woman, rather than an intellectual featherweight who won roles on her beauty alone.”

Denton Record Chronicle

“With admirable linguistic versatility, Ms. Kanakis sang Delibes in French and Schubert in German ...and hit some fine B’s, C’s, and even an E-flat. Luther College and its music students must be proud.”

New York Concert Review

“Slapstick exploits from Cinderella’s conniving stepsisters (Karen Kanakis ...) kept the audience laughing throughout. Timing and expressions were priceless.”

The Salt Lake Tribune

“Guest soprano Karen Kanakis displayed fine vocal technique in Mozart’s ‘*Exsultate, Jubilate*,’ but really won over the large crowd with ‘Christmas Song’ and Adam’s soaring ‘O Holy Night.’”

The Springfield News-Leader



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