



## Barbara Kozelj

### Mezzo-soprano

#### **WAGNER *Tristan & Isolde* (Brangäne), Oper Leipzig**

Barbara Kozelj's Brangäne offered the most consistently impressive vocal performance, as unfailingly intelligent as her subtly expressive gesture.

*Mark Berry, Boulezian, October 2019*

Frau Kozelj begeisterte rundweg mit ihrer vokalen Interpretation dieser wichtigen Rolle. Ihre Stimme ist eher hell gefärbt, derjenigen der Isolde im Timbre sehr ähnlich. Sie verfügt über ein beeindruckendes Volumen und beglückte (wie eigentlich alle Protagonisten) mit ihrer klaren Diktion und subtiler Phrasierung.

Ms Kozelj thrilled with her vocal interpretation of this important role. Her voice is rather brightly coloured, very similar to that of the Isolde in timbre. It has an impressive volume and delighted (like all protagonists) with its clear diction and subtle phrasing.

*Kaspar Sanneman, Oper aktuell, October 2019*

Als Brangäne begeisterte hingegen Barbara Kozelj mit klangstarkem, sauber intoniertem Mezzosopran. Engagiert im Spiel war sie ein deutlicher Aktivposten. Selten ist die Anteilnahme, die szenische Interaktion in dieser Rolle derart glaubhaft und gekonnt zu erleben. Sauber in der Intonation erklangen die „Wacht“-Gesänge. Dazu erlebte sie den Text deutlich und intensiv, dass es eine Freude war. Eine ausgezeichnete Leistung!

As Brangäne, Barbara Kozelj impressed with a powerful, clean-toned, mezzo-soprano. Engaged in the game, she was a clear asset. Rarely does one experience such believable and skillful scenic interaction. Clean in intonation, the 'watch' chants rang out. To this end, she experienced the text so clearly and intensely, that it was a joy. An excellent performance.

*Dirk Schauss, Online Merker, October 2019*

So klangschön wie die Isolde wirkte auf mich auch die Brangäne von Barbara Kozelj, die aus Slowenien stammt und mit ihrem dunklen Timbre jeder Situation gewachsen schien.

As beautiful as the Isolde was, the same applies to the Slovenian Barbara Kozelj whose dark timbre seemed able to cope with any situation.

*Michael Ernst, MDR Kultur, October 2019*

Die Mezzosopranistin Barbara Kozelj aus Slowenien war als die Stimme der Vernunft als Brangäne eine ideale Partnerin der Isolde auf Augenhöhe. Stimmlich mit Meagan Miller gut abgestimmt, bietet sie dank ihrer starken Präsenz ein echtes Erlebnis.

The mezzo-soprano Barbara Kozelj from Slovenia was an ideal partner for the Isolde, on an equal footing as the voice of reason, Brangäne. Vocally well-tuned with Meagan Miller, she offers a real experience thanks to her strong presence.

*Thomas Thielemann, IOCO Kultur am Netz, October 2019*

Zu einer Rolle, gewichtiger als Kurwenal und Marke, wird in dieser Inszenierung die Brangäne. Barbara Kozelj singt sie, ihr Timbre ist Millers Isolde etwas ähnlich. Dass Kozeljs Brangäne im ersten Akt stimmlich von einer größeren Unruhe getrieben scheint als Isolde, passt durchaus. Denn sehr deutlich ist hier eine Art Liebesbeziehung wahrzunehmen – und Brangänes verzweifelttes Bewusstsein, dass diese Liebe zerbrechen wird. Und so wirkt ihr Verlust am Ende der Oper schmerzlich wie kaum je.

In this production, the Brangäne becomes a role that is more important than Kurwenal and Marke. Sung by Barbara Kozelj, her timbre is somewhat similar to Miller's Isolde. The fact that Kozelj's Brangäne seems to be vocally driven by a greater unrest than Isolde in the first act is quite fitting. For here a kind of love relationship can be perceived very clearly – and Brangäne's desperate awareness that this love will break down. And so her loss at the end of the opera seems more painful than ever.

*Hundert11.net, October 2019*

Als Brangäne ist Barbara Kozelj eine mit viel Vernunft denkende Mahnerin, die Isolde eher mit vollstimmig klar klingenden Ansagen als mit warm flehenden Bitten zur Seite steht. Eine spannende Interpretation dieser Partie.

As Brangäne, Barbara Kozelj is a reminder of who is at Isolde's side with full-voiced clear-sounding announcements rather than warm pleas. An exciting interpretation of this role.

*Online Music Magazine, Berndt Stopka, October 2019*

Barbara Kozelj, die junge Mezzosopranistin in der Partie der Brangäne...in dem berühmten Wachgesangschwebte ihre Stimme mit perfektem Legato durch das Haus.

Barbara Kozelj, the young mezzo-soprano in the role of the Brangäne... in the famous *Wachgesangschwebte*, her voice roared through the house with perfect legato.

*Artvisionandmidou.wordpress.com, October 2019*

Barbara Kozelj ist ein jugendlich schwereloser Wagner-Mezzosopran, der eine wohlige Wärme auch in den tiefen Lagen verbreitet. Sie vermag zu explodieren, wächst mit dem dynamischen Crescendo über sich hinaus.

Barbara Kozelj is a youthfully weightless Wagner mezzo-soprano who spreads a pleasant warmth even in the low register. It can explode, grows beyond itself with the dynamic crescendo.

*Oliver Hohlback, Operapoint, October 2019*

Bei den Sängern möchte ich mit denen beginnen, die mich besonders beeindruckten. Das ist als erste die Slowenin Barbara Kozelj, die mit der Brangäne ihr Rollendebüt gab. Sie verfügt über einen charaktvollen leuchtenden Mezzo und scheint auch mit ihren darstellerischen Qualitäten eine erstklassige Besetzung für die Warnerin Isoldes zu sein.

With the singers, I would like to start with those who impressed me most. The first would be the Slovenian Barbara Kozelj, who made her role debut with Brangäne. She has a characterful luminous mezzo and also seems to be a first-class choice for Warner's Isolde with her acting qualities.

*Opera online, Klaus Billand, October 2019*

**Wonderfeel Festival, The Netherlands, recital with Judith van Wanroij (soprano) and Thomas Beijer (piano)**

Met een intense uitvoering van de Vivaldi-aria *Sposa son disprezzata* bezorgen mezzosopraan Barbara Kozelj en pianist Thomas Beijer je de rillingen.

With an intense performance of the Vivaldi-aria *Sposa son disprezzata*, mezzo-soprano Barbara Kozelj and pianist Thomas Beijer give you the shivers.

*NRC, Joep Christenhusz, July 2019*

**VIVALDI/MORETTO: Madame de Tourvel *Dangerous Liaisons*  
The Netherlands Bach Society, Opera 2day, Hernan Schwartzman**

The strongest link of the show is mezzo-soprano Barbara Kozelj (Tourvel). Her acting is mesmerizingly restrained, she sings fantastically and makes you, for a moment, truly feel sorry for her fall for cunning temptation.

*NRC, Micha Spel, March 2019*

Singing with a velvety legato, mezzo-soprano Barbara Kozelj as Madame de Tourvel made her every appearance an event, including the favourite "Sposa, son disprezzata" [...] lonely cries rose forlornly out of the darkness in the echo aria "L'ombre, l'aure e ancora il rio" from *Ottone in villa*—piercingly beautiful.

*OperaToday, Jenny Camiller, March 2019*

The deep and powerful heartfelt voice of the Presidente de Tourvel (Barbara Kozelj) remains with the audience for a long time.

*Trouw, Frederieke Berntsen, March 2019*

Danceney's duet with Cécile takes your breath away, as does the singing of Madame de Tourvel (Barbara Kozelj), so beautifully coloured by emotions.

*8weekly, Kim Saris, March 2019*

**Song recital, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, with with Julius Drake piano**

We'd better keep the Slovenian mezzo-soprano Barbara Kozelj in the Netherlands, it turned out at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam. [...] This is a song recital in which the singer was completely in her role before she has even sung a note. [...] She intonates expressively in Korngold's *Sterbelied*. And once in a while she reveals such a well-aimed vocal outburst that we instantly understand that she can also handle concert halls ten times this size. [...] Fantastic how she lures you into the night in Berg's *Warm die Lüfte* and lets you reconcile with the darkness. That little bow in her voice, that final note. *Tiefschön*. [...] In the second half, there is a clear winner. The naive song settings of Joaquín Rodrigo are not equal to those of Enrique Granados. In *La maja dolorosa* one, two and three, the mouths of the audience fall open...

*Volkskrant, Merlijn Kerkhof, April 2019*

**CD: UNHEARD – Songs of Hans Walter Süsskind, EBONY QUARTET**

Die Singstimme wächst aus dem Streichquartettklang heraus, erscheint eingeschmolzen in ihn als fünfte Stimme. Dem wird die wundervoll instrumental geführte Mezzosopranstimme von Barbara Kozelj voll gerecht. Schwebendes Schreiten durchwirkt das zweite Lied „Heimweg“ zu extremer Lage erhebt sich das dritte Lied „Die Geliebte“, und das Schlusslied „Der Sterbliche“ entfaltet sich von majestätischem Unisono zu tippig bliihendem Klang.

*Musica Reanimata, Gottfried Eberle*

...sublime singing by Barbara Kozelj (how expressive her interpretation!) in four songs of Hans Walther Süsskind: Zauber bei Tag, Heimweg, Der Geliebte en Der Sterbliche.

*Aart van de Wal, Opus Klassiek*

Barbara Kozelj creates a perfect atmosphere in Süsskinds Vier Gesänge...

*Volkskrant, Biëlla Luttmer*

**MONTEVERDI Penelope *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, Academy of Ancient Music, Richard Egarr**

The vocal star of the show was Barbara Kozelj' s Penelope. This was a noble, dependable portrayal, in which her mellow and controlled singing sounded like a contralto at times, giving natural and soulful expression to the character' s suffering patience. She is certainly a singer to watch.

*Classical Source, Curtis Rogers*

Barbara Kozelj in the role of Penelope set the bar high with her Act One lament. Her voice freighted with the grief of the passing years, it articulated her numbed sorrow with the subtlest of nuances.

*Evening Standard, Barry Millington*

Barbara Kozelj was similarly grounded in her performance, giving us a lovely sense of Penelope's patience and the sense of being cut off and walled in by her emotions. But also, stretched thin, this was someone who might break. Kozelj had a beautifully calm demeanour, combined with a deep expressivity in the way she sang the Monteverdi.

*Planet Hugill*

I was won over by Kozelj' s nuanced singing. Lots of floated notes and delicate inflections – a rather internalised grief, very stylish.

*Opera, Innit*

Barbara Kozelj as Penelope had a more direct voice, but its clarity was matched by equal levels of sensitivity and feeling, and her final reconciliation with Ulisse was deeply moving.

*Music OMH, Sam Smith*

Barbara Kozelj' s melancholy Penelope was the still centre of the opera, fending off the importunate suitors.

*Express, Clare Colvin*

**BACH Matthäus-Passion, Orchestra of St Luke's / Iván Fischer / Carnegie Hall  
New York**

Most to be praised was mezzo Barbara Kozelj whose expressive rounded voice filled the hall, particularly so in "Buß und Reu."

*Seen and Heard International*

Barbara Kozelj was an affecting mezzo, opening the second half with an unusually cutting cry of "Ach!"

*Bachtrack*

The vocal highlights of the evening, however, belonged to soprano Dominique Labelle and alto Barbara Kozelj, who imbued their respective arias and duets with crystal-clear diction, sophisticated phrasing, and a solemn stage presence. In Part One's early aria, "Buß und Reu," Kozelj presented a pious woman filled with reverence after washing the head of Jesus, despite being mocked by the disciples for her extravagant use of expensive oil. Pleading that her "teardrops be an acceptable anointing to you, faithful Jesus," Kozelj's rich lower register complemented the falling staccato flute motion of Orchestra l's Elizabeth Mann and Sheryl Henze.

*Feastofmusic.com*

Barbara Kozelj and Silvie Jensen have splendid voices, the former deep and dark in 'Buß und Reu' and enchanting in ' Erbarme dich, mein Gott'...

*Classical Source, Lewis M. Smoley*

**MAHLER *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* Holland Symfonia / Otto Tausk /  
Haarlem**

In Songs of a Wayfarer Barbara Kozelj revealed the art of singing that spoke straight to the heart. With lithe lines and clear articulation.

*Telegraaf*

With wonderfully restrained grief and dramatic outbursts of despair, Kozelj colours Mahler's rich palette in phenomenally.

*Haarlems Dagblad*