



Polly Leech *mezzo-soprano*



Polly Leech is a British mezzo-soprano from Wiltshire. She has just completed a year as a Young Artist at the National Opera Studio in London, having graduated the previous year from the Royal College of Music with a postgraduate Masters in Vocal Performance (Distinction) under vocal professor Amanda Roocroft and vocal coach Christopher Glynn. She was the Theo Max van der Beugel Scholar and was also supported by the Josephine Baker Trust. Polly is also a Britten-Pears Young Artist. Prior to her musical studies, she graduated from Durham University with a BSc (Hons) in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry.

Her recent engagements include **Mrs Noye** *Noye's Fludde* for the Lichfield Festival, **Hänsel** *Hänsel und Gretel* (Pop-Up Opera), **Fekluša** *Kat'à Kabanovà* (Opera Holland Park), **Pitti-Sing** *The Mikado* (Charles Court Opera), **Third Lady/Third Boy** *The Magic Flute* (Charles Court Opera), **Olga** *Eugene Onegin* (Whitgift School), **Queen/Second Village Woman/Mother** *Raven Snow* (new commission by Murphy/Treacher/Lloyd for The Opera Story), **Irene** *Theodora* (RCM Oratorio Society), **Tisbe** *Cinderella* (HighTime), **Countess of Desmond/Lady Lewson/Miss FitzHenry/Mrs Birch/Lady Jersey/Mrs Worrall/Second Nun** *English Eccentrics* by Malcolm Williamson (British Youth Opera), **Wife** *76 Days* by Kenichi Sekiguchi and **Angel** *BEL and the DRAGON* by Alex Paxton (RCM/Tête à Tête), **Florence Pike** *Albert Herring* (RCM International Opera School), **Dritter Knabe** *Die Zauberflöte* (RCMIOS), and **Mrs Herring** *Albert Herring* (Samling Academy Opera). For the performance of the seven roles she played in Malcolm Williamson's *English Eccentrics*, Polly was awarded the Basil A Turner Prize and the Dame Hilda Brackett Award from Sadler's Wells. Whilst at the National Opera Studio, she sang a wide variety of repertoire in scenes at the major UK companies.

Polly's solo oratorio performances include the Bach *Magnificat* and *St Matthew Passion*, *Elijah* (Mendelssohn), *Messe de minuit pour Noel* (Charpentier), *Mass in D* (Dvorak), Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, *Messiah* (Handel), *Requiem* (Mozart), *Requiem* (Verdi), *Nelson Mass* (Haydn), *Mass in C* (Beethoven), and *Gloria* (Vivaldi). In recital, Polly has performed Berlioz' *Les nuits d'été*, Mahler's *Rückert Lieder*, Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Britten's *Cabaret Songs* and *A Charm of Lullabies*, and Joseph Horowitz's *Lady Macbeth: A Scena*. Venues performed at include St Martin's-in-the-Field, Durham Cathedral, York Minster, Wigmore Hall, St John's Smith Square, The Sage Gateshead and The Britten Studio at Snape Maltings.

Polly has participated in masterclasses with Christoph Prégardien, Julius Drake, Richard Stokes, Simon Keenlyside, Patricia Bardon, Patricia McMahon, Caroline Dowdle and Paul Farrington. She returned to Aldeburgh as a Britten-Pears Young Artist in March 2018 to study the role of **Irene** in Handel's *Theodora* with Sarah Connolly and Christian Curnyn.

For the 2018/19 season, Polly has joined the Dutch National Opera Studio. She makes her debut with the company this autumn as **Pastuchyna** in *Jenufa* directed by Katie Mitchell. In 2019, she makes her debut at the Opéra de Montpellier as **Hippolyta** in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.