

MARIE LENORMAND

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Masterful French mezzo-soprano **Marie Lenormand** has been praised for her performances on the operatic and concert stage. After completing a dazzling turn in the title role in Ambroise Thomas' *Mignon* at l'Opéra comique de Paris, her performance was met with popular and critical accolades. In recognition of her portrayal, the French national press awarded her the honor of "2010 Musical Revelation." She was the first vocal artist in six years to win the award after a string of renowned conductors and a string quartet.



The 2018-2019 season saw her as La Mère/L'Autre Mère in *Coraline* with Opéra de Lille, Madame Michu in *Les P'tites Michu* with Théâtre de Caen and Opéra de Reims, Anna in *Les Sept Pêchés Capitaux* with Opéra de Tours, and Beatrice in Albert Roussel's *Le Testament de Tante Caroline* with Les Frivolités Parisiennes. Engagements for the 2019-2020 season include *Testament de la Tante Caroline* with the Théâtre Imperial de Compiègne, *Les P'tites Michu* with l'Opéra de Tours, Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro* with l'Opéra de Lorraine, Meg Page in *Falstaff* with l'Opéra de Montpellier, Gertrude in *Roméo et Juliette* in concert with Montpellier and the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, and a reprise of the *Petite Balade aux Enfers* with l'Opéra Comique.

The 2017-2018 season included Ms. Lenormand's return to the Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival as the title role in *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, *Parodie d'ATYS de Lully* with Angers-Nantes Opéra, *Pierrot Lunaire* at the Auditorium Paris Bastille, the White Cat/ Squirrel in *L'enfant et les sortilèges* with the Berlin Philharmonic, Jacinthe in *Le Domino noir* with Opéra Royal de Wallonie and Opéra Comique, and Madame Michu in *Les P'tites Michu* with Angers-Nantes Opéra. In the 2016-2017 season, she sang the title role in Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* with Opera Köln and the Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival, *Parodie d'ATYS de Lully* with Teatro Manoel in Malta, *Pierrot Lunaire* with Festival Marto and the Théâtre de l'Athénée, Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été* with Printemps des Arts de Monaco, and Suzanne in Milhaud's *La Mère Coupable* with Onsite Opera in New York. In the 2015-2016 season, Ms. Lenormand brought her Marguerite in *Le Pré aux clercs* to the Wexford Festival, sang Hansel in *Hansel und Gretel* with Angers-Nantes Opera, *Cassiope* in Lully's *Persée* with the Chateau du Versailles Spectacles, Orlovsky in a tour of *Die Fledermaus* with Seiji Ozawa's Music Academy, Phedre in *Hippolyte et Aricie ou La Belle-mère amoureuse* with Théâtre Impérial de Compiègne, France, and Campra's *Le carnaval de* with the Fondazione Palazzetto Bru Zane. Engagements for Ms. Lenormand's 2014-2015 season included Ottone in Boston Baroque's *Agrippina*, *Candide* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Marguerite in *Le pré aux clercs* with the Opéra-Comique, Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'été* with Festival de Laon, France, Témire/ Amour in Leclair's *Scylla et Glaucus*, with Les Nouveaux Caractères, and a concert appearance with Orchestre National d'Île de France. The summer of 2015 saw her join Le Festival Radio France as Flamel in Offenbach's *Fantasio* and return to the Saito-Kinen Festival for *Béatrice et Bénédict*. In the 2013-2014 season, Ms. Lenormand joined the Saito-Kinen Festival in Japan as the White Cat and Squirrel in *L'enfant*, Opera de Massy as Meg in *Falstaff*, reprised Le Prince in *Cendrillon* with New Orleans Opera, joined Palazzetto Bru Zane for *Le Saphir*, debuted her *Carmen* with Theatre Imperial de Compiègne, and joined *Les Violons du Roy* for concerts in Quebec. The 2012-2013 season began with Le Prince in *Cendrillon* with Grand Theatre Grande Salle and Grand Theatre Massenet, followed by Stephano in *Roméo et Juliette* with Opera de Tours and Opera D'Avignon. She returned to New York City Opera as the title role in *La Périochole* for which she was praised as a "splendid French mezzo-soprano" (*Opera News*) and "a real star" (*Wall Street Journal*). She was seen in concert with New York Festival of Song and Berlioz's *Les Huit Scènes de Faust* with the Dresden Philharmonic.

Other notable performances include her New York Philharmonic debut as the Fox in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. In Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, she has sung Dorabella with Stuttgart, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and l'Opéra de Rouen and Despina with New York City Opera. Additionally, she is noted for performances as Cherubino with Houston Grand Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Opera Pacific, and l'Opéra de Rouen, Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with Dallas Opera and in Stuttgart, Penelope in Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* with Chicago Opera Theater, Urbain in Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* at Bard Summerscape, Fragoletto in Offenbach's *Les Brigands* at the Grand Théâtre de Bordeaux and l'Opéra du Luxembourg, Lapak in *The Cunning Little Vixen* in Florence, Arsamene in Handel's *Serse* with Boston Baroque, Hermia in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Houston Grand Opera, Annio in Mozart's *Clemenza di Tito* at l'Opéra d'Avignon, Aloès in *L'Etoile* by Chabrier at l'Opéra du Luxembourg, and Siebel in *Faust* with Houston Grand Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Madison Opera, New Orleans Opera with Paul Groves as Faust, and at Grand Théâtre de Bordeaux in a new production by J.P. Clarac and O. Deloeil.

Ms. Lenormand has performed Siegrune in *Die Walküre* at the Châtelet under Christoph Eschenbach and was heard in Chabrier's *L'Etoile* in Angers and Nantes. In January 2006, she sang Cidippe in *Aristeo* and the title role in *Bauci e Filemone* by Glück, recorded under the Ambrosie label. She has made debuts with New Orleans Opera as Nicklausse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and performed Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* at La Cité de la Musique in Paris under the baton of Emmanuel Krivine with his newly established orchestra, La Chambre Philharmonique.

Ms. Lenormand made her debut with San Francisco Opera as The Fox in Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince*, a role she created in worldwide premiere for Houston Grand Opera in 2003. She was invited to Seiji Ozawa's Saito-Kinen Festival to sing Lapak and cover the Fox in a new production of *The Cunning Little Vixen* by Laurent Pelly conducted by Seiji Ozawa. She has appeared in concert with François-Xavier Roth and Les Siècles in Mozart's *Requiem* in Aix en Provence, with Houston's Ars Lyrica, with the Southeastern Festival of Song in Atlanta and Dallas, with the Bochum Orchestra in Germany singing *Le nuits d'été* with Steven Sloane conducting, with the Winston-Salem Symphony for Handel's *Messiah*, le Gradus ad Musicam ensemble in Nancy, France for Pergolèse's *Stabat Mater*, and with Berkshire Opera for their opening night gala. She debuted with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by François-Xavier Roth in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* at the Florida International Festival in Daytona Beach. A distinguished oratorio singer, she was the alto soloist in Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* under Robert Shaw, as well as in *Elijah* with a cast headed by Sherrill Milnes. Ms. Lenormand was a member of the Houston Grand Opera Studio from 1999 to 2002.

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CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Opéra de Lille – Coraline

"Marie Lenormand embodies The Mother and The Other Mother, figures of power in each of the two worlds. The mezzo-soprano elaborates the two facets of her character with great skill, between a loving mother and the demonic character that constitutes her negative side, whose false devotion reveals dark intentions. Her voice extends beyond the pit with ease, whether it is soft or on the contrary full of fury (especially when it makes her husband disappear magically), alternating shadow and light which she distills the effects."

-Olyrix

"By his side, the other most striking role is that held by Marie Lenormand : we do not lose a word of what the mezzo sings, so perfect a witch is she that we look forward to the day when she will approach The Witch in Hänsel and Gretel."

-ForumOpera.com

On Site Opera – La mère coupable

"Mezzo Marie Lenormand immediately conjured a vibrant and characterful Suzanne." -Opera News

"Marie Lenormand's pure and mellow mezzo made Suzanne a delight whenever she appeared."

-Musical America Worldwide

Arsenal de Metz – Persée

"Marie Lenormand est une Cassiope à la voix solide et au timbre charnu, à la fois reine charismatique et mère éplorée." / "Marie Lenormand is a Cassiope with a solid voice and plump timbre, charismatic queen and tearful mother at the same time."

-Le Babillard

Recording – Scylla et Glaucus

". . . Marie Lenormand, mezzo-soprano chaleureuse, qui incarne talentueusement aussi le coquin Amour" / "Marie Lenormand, warm mezzo-soprano, who also plays the mischievous Amour with talent" -Bachtrack

Decca Classics Release – L'enfant et les sortilèges with Seiji Ozawa

"A special bouquet to Marie Lenormand and Elliot Madore as the cats, whose mewling (Mônâou, Méinhon etc) is particularly accurate."

-Gramophone

Le Festival Radio France – Fantasio

"Flamel is sung by Marie Lenormand, with a beautiful rich mezzo timbre, ample depth, always intelligible."

-ForumOpera.com

"We must also mention Marie Lenormand, an excellent Flamel (page to the princess), whose mezzo has beautiful colors and continuous intelligibility."

-Musicologie.org

"Marie Lenormand, touching in the role of the page Flamel"

-ConcertClassic.com

"(Renaud Delaigue as the king and) Marie Lenormand as the page Flamel created notable characters"

-ClassiqueNews.com

Le pré aux clercs

Wexford Festival

"The role of Marguerite is more spoken than sung, but mezzo Marie Lenormand makes tremendous impact, warmly imperious as the political fairy-godmother of the piece, and adding personality to Hérold's many trios and ensembles. Her acid interplay with Eric Huchet's Cantarelli – the court's bibulous Italian master of ceremonies – helps temper the opera's more pastel-coloured pastoral moments."

-TheArtsDesk.com

L'Opéra Comique

"Marie Lenormand in the role of Marguerite has a fabulously imposing presence and her expression, leaning towards darkness, is deliciously nuanced. She is haughty as a queen should be and is always gaining attention even in the ensembles"

-ForumOpera.com

"With her spicier mezzo colors, Marie Lenormand, an exceptional actress by the way, imposes a Margot full of authority."

-ArtistikRezo.com

"Marie Lenormand portrays a conquering Marguerite de Valois, who protects her friends' romances for lack of satisfying her own. In her superb amazon costume or her crimson velvet gown - (...) - what panache and musical intelligence!"

-LaCroix.com

Boston Baroque – Agrippina

"A pants role sung nicely by the French mezzo Marie Lenormand, Otho is the only morally uncompromised character of the sordid bunch."

-Boston Musical Intelligencer

"Compared to the other characters, who brim and sparkle with ambition and hypocrisy, Otho does seem a little dull, but Marie Lenormand delivered a heartfelt portrayal. Her mezzo. . . was sheathed with warmth even in the lowest regions of her voice."

-Boston Classical Review

"Otho is the only character whose intentions are pure, and as such, finds himself buffeted by the winds of ill intention all around. Marie Lenormand took on the role. . . her singing was tonally rich and deeply felt."

-Boston Globe

New Orleans Opera – Cendrillon

"Judith Gauthier, making her United States debut, and Marie Lenormand were the well-paired Cendrillon and Prince Charming. In solo moments and in their extended duets their voices blended beautifully. Both artists were excellent dramatically, especially convincing in the more melancholy aspects of their roles."

- Opera News

New York City Opera – La Périchole

"City Opera recruited two winning French singers for the lead roles, which is helpful in a work that has so much spoken French dialogue. Marie Lenormand brings a rich mezzo-soprano voice, grace and spunk to Périchole."

- The New York Times

"None of this mattered when (Marie) Lenormand was onstage. She maintained an exact balance between the role's elements of irony and sentiment. Even in Périchole's staggering-drunk number, "Ah! quel dîner," she was the soul of elegance. Lenormand is a Despina, a Mignon and Cendrillon Prince, but here the deft offhandedness of her singing, firmly rooted in the spoken word, made her seem less like an opera singer than a creature of the boulevards. When she sang the score's most celebrated number, "Tu n'es pas beau," one could almost think that Offenbach had composed it for her and her alone."

- Opera News

"Marie Lenormand, a real star, was adorable as the eponymous Peruvian street singer who agrees to be the mistress of the Viceroy of Peru in order to get a square meal."

-Wall Street Journal

"Top-notch musical presentation came from the fine baton and coloristic ear of conductor Emmanuel Plasson, with two Francophone leads heading a uniformly strong cast. Marie Lenormand's smooth mezzo-soprano and pert stage manner made the most of the title role's many demands (at one point she is spun upside-down on a carnival knife-throwing wheel)."

-The Classical Review

New York Festival of Song – Jacques Brel and Charles Trenet: Fire and Fantasy

"Indeed, mezzo-soprano Marie Lenormand was so brilliant that one almost regretted that this wasn't a solo recital — contravention though that would be of the NYFOS philosophy that it's better to share the music (with each other, with the audience, with the world). Pert and pretty, funny as hell, Lenormand fully inhabited the dramatic situation of each song, and she expertly negotiated the vocal distinctions between *chanteuse* and *cantatrice*. Moreover, the woman knows how to work a crowd. We were at her mercy, and we loved her for it."

- Billvesees

New York City Opera – *Così fan tutte*

“Marie Lenormand was a sassy, captivating Despina, controlling the evening and injecting cynical inflections into her mezzo-soprano.”

- *San Francisco Chronicle*

“Things start to go off in Mr. Alden’s production when Despina appears, here the feisty, vocally vibrant mezzo-soprano Marie Lenormand. We first see her sitting in the park, looking almost like a vagrant, accepting a cigarette from a passing stranger. If you did not know she was the sisters’ maidservant, you might not figure this out.”

- *The New York Times*

“Reason may be hard to find in the staging, but the singers, at least, provided glimmers of light. As Despina — in this version, a homeless woman recruited to assist in the scheme — Marie Lenormand offered a tangy mezzo and a much-needed sense of fun...”

- *The New York Post*

“The Despina of Marie Lenormand brought to mind a darker, more hardened version of Fellini’s Cabiria: she was a bag lady who turned tricks, conversed with a sock puppet, and dominated the stage with her every utterance and glance of those soulful, saucer-shaped eyes.”

- *The Classical Review*

Lyric Opera of Kansas City – *Così fan tutte*

“In the role of Dorabella, mezzo-soprano Marie Lenormand made the most notable stage entrance of the evening. She climbed up a ladder from the orchestra pit, as if climbing up a ladder from a swimming pool... Lenormand’s warm and flexible voice was quite attractive, and she proved she could sing standing, kneeling and prostrate on a sofa.”

- *Kansas City Star*

“Five of the six singers made their Lyric Opera debuts with this production, but it was the two mezzos, Marie Lenormand and Susanne Mentzer, who stole the show and appropriately earned the most applause come curtain. Lenormand’s Dorabella, though attached at the hip to Fiordiligi for most of the opera’s proceedings, imbued her character with an appropriate amount of ridiculous melodramatics and phenomenal comedic acting to make Dorabella an individual. Her voice was lustrous and agile—well suited to her sex-kitten persona hidden underneath layers of propriety.”

- *KCMetropolis*

Houston Grand Opera – *Le nozze di Figaro*

“Marie Lenormand shines as Cherubino, the hormonally charged adolescent ensnared in the two couples’ love games. Lenormand makes Cherubino a petite gallant, yet her notable mezzo shades youthful impulsiveness with throaty fervor and poignant yearning.”

- *The Houston Chronicle*

“The “pants role” of young stud Cherubino, in love with love, is deftly handled by mezzo-soprano Marie Lenormand. A natural comedian, she positively purrs in the “buffa” scenes when she hides behind, next to and in the wing chair while Almaviva courts Susanna.”

- *Houston Press*

“Marie Lenormand stole her scenes as Cherubino, with perfectly timed comic and lusty facial expressions. “Voi che sapete,” that delightful, rambling aria, was another highlight of Act II which, in this production, stood as the apex of the show.”

- *Classical Music Network*

Opéra Comique – *Mignon*

“Poignantly, the young mezzo Marie Lenormand offers a particularly moving portrait of the title role, the touching Mignon. Enigmatic, ethereal, she skillfully uses the many colors of her beautiful voice. His look of a tomboy, her child distress, the modesty of his grief, the birth of her femininity - all combine to make her an outstanding interpreter of the role, giving reflections of Edith Piaf with stirring emotion, culminating in a tear-inducing “Connais-tu le pays.””

- *Classicnews.com*

“Marie Lenormand chisels a portrait of Mignon that is both melancholy and passionate with the ineffable tenderness and great personality of her plummy mezzo-soprano.”

- *La Croix*

“Mignon is Marie Lenormand, a warm and distinguished musician whose every phrasing is a model of simplicity and elegance. How can one not be moved by this passionate savage who sees his love rewarded?”

- *Diapason*

"Marie Lenormand hints at the fragility of the title character and the doubts that surround this young girl lost among a troupe of traveling actors and gypsies. Her musicality allows her to express a simmering feeling of both learning and loving, homesick for the land to which she was born."
- *LesEchos.fr*

"The success of this production is shared between all parties who revel unabashedly in this lost repertoire... mezzo Marie Lenormand, proves a touching incarnation of Goethe's humble heroine."
- *Le Monde*

"As for Mignon Marie Lenormand: she is noble, touching with profound musicality, as the role is completely inhabited by this mezzo-soprano."
- *Le Figaro*

"Marie Lenormand avoids making a meal of Mignon's signature tune, thereby preserving its simple, emotional core."
- *Financial Times*

"As Mignon, with a celestial air of Edith Piaf, mezzo Marie Lenormand embodies a playful Gavroche with a melancholy voice of amber that rises to the challenge. Funny, poignant, perfect."
- *Webthea.com*

"Above all, Marie Lenormand is a fine musician and touching in the title role and proves we can still believe in Mignon in 2010."
- *American Foreign Press*

Cincinnati Opera – Le nozze di Figaro

"For sheer energy, Marie Lenormand's Cherubino was unstoppable. She bounded about the stage, leaped, crawled, staggered, swaggered and was a whirlwind of mayhem -a "real" teenage boy- all the while singing impeccably."
- *Opera News*

Chicago Opera Theatre – Il ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria

"Lenormand, with her rock-solid technique, wrapped her red-burgundy mezzo securely around Penelope's inner sufferings."
- *Chicago Tribune*

Houston Grand Opera – Faust

"In the travesti role of Marguerite's adolescent admirer Siebel, Marie Lenormand supplied if anything even finer singing, true and puissant, and she looked convincingly boyish."
- *Dallas Morning News*