

ALISSA ANDERSON CONTRALTO

Hailed for her “*deliciously over the top*” and “*powerful mezzo*” by Opera News, **Alissa Anderson** wields her comic prowess, striking features, and her “*powerful vocalism*” to great acclaim. Ms. Anderson achieved a considerable success and was celebrated for being “*impeccably prepared*” and “*splendid in every way*” when she stepped in as Florence Pike in Santa Fe Opera’s *Albert Herring* under the baton of Sir Andrew Davis. The 2019-2020 saw her debut with Opera Philadelphia as Princess Clarissa in *The Love for Three Oranges*, Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd* with the Royal Danish Opera, and a return to Opera Birmingham as Madame de la Haltière in *Cendrillon* (cancelled). This season and beyond includes Erda in *Das Rheingold* with Opera Santa Barbara, Dame Quickly in *Falstaff* with Berkshire Opera, and Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Austin Opera as well as performances with Angers-Nantes Opera, and Opera Philadelphia.



The 2018-2019 season included Ms. Anderson’s return to San Diego Opera as Maddalena in *Rigoletto*, her debut with Opera San Antonio as Marthe in *Faust*, and Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Mrs. Andrews/The Bird Woman in *Mary Poppins* in a return to Utah Festival Opera. Other recent performances for Ms. Anderson include The Witch in *Into the Woods* with Utah Festival Opera, *La tragédie de Carmen* with Opera Birmingham and Opera Louisiana, Frugola/La Zia Principessa in *Il trittico* with Opera Delaware, Tisbe in *La Cenerentola* with San Diego Opera, La Zia Principessa/Ciesca in *Il trittico* with the Opera Company of Middlebury, Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro* with North Carolina Opera, La Zia Principessa/Zita in *Suor Angelica/Gianni Schicchi* with Opera Santa Barbara, Cleo in *The Most Happy Fella* with Tulsa Opera, Mother Goose in *The Rake’s Progress* with Utah Opera, and her debut with Houston Grand Opera’s *East + West* series in *River of Light* by composer Jack Perla and librettist Chitra Divakaruni. In addition, she made her “*comically perfect*” debut as Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff* with Opera in the Heights, Lampito in *Lysistrata* with Fort Worth Opera, Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Opera Santa Barbara, Emilia in *Otello* and Zulma in *L’italiana in Algeri* with Opera Southwest, Madame de la Haltière in *Cendrillon* and the Mother in *Hansel and Gretel* with the Santa Fe Concert Association, Maddalena in *Rigoletto* with Opera in the Heights, and her return to Santa Fe Opera where she sang the Society Woman in *The Last Savage*. Recent concert engagements have included John Adams’ *Grand Pianola Music* with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Haydn’s *Lord Nelson Mass* with Concordia University Symphony Orchestra, her European debut as mezzo soloist in the Verdi *Requiem* with performances throughout Germany and France and her Lincoln Center debut as the mezzo soloist in Mahler’s *2nd Symphony*.

At Sarasota Opera, Ms. Anderson performed the roles of Dritte Dame in *Die Zauberflöte*, Sandman in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Flora in *La Traviata*. As a resident and principal artist with Fort Worth Opera she performed the roles of Tisbe in *La Cenerentola*, Mother in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Alisa in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and the Angel Trio in *Angels in America*. Scott Cantrell of the Dallas Morning News praised her 2010 performance of the Verdi *Requiem* with the University of North Texas Symphony Orchestra stating, “*Mezzo Alissa Anderson supplied aptly rich tones and an awesome chest voice.*”

As a young artist, she performed with the Santa Fe Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, and Ashlawn-Highland Opera, as well as spending three consecutive summers at the Seagle Music Colony where she sang the title role in *Carmen*, Anita in *West Side Story*, Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Alma March in *Little Women*, Woman in *Marry Me A Little*, and Hedy La Rue in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*.

Ms. Anderson received the Kathryn Tyrell Award in the Shreveport Opera Competition, the Agnes M. Canning Award from Santa Fe Opera, and the Stuart R. Silver Award from Sarasota Opera. She holds her Master of Music from The University of Maryland and her Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of North Texas. She is currently a student of Stephen King.

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ROLES

Marcellina	<i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	Austin Opera	2021
Dame Quickly	<i>Falstaff</i>	Berkshire Opera	2021
Erda	<i>Das Rheingold</i>	Opera Santa Barbara	2021
Madame de la Haltière*	<i>Cendrillon</i>	Opera Birmingham*; Santa Fe Concert Assoc	2020; '13
Mrs. Lovett	<i>Sweeney Todd</i>	Royal Danish Opera	2020
Princess Clarissa	<i>The Love for Three Oranges</i>	Opera Philadelphia	2019
Mrs. Andrews/The Bird Woman	<i>Mary Poppins</i>	Utah Festival Opera	2019
Marcellina	<i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	Utah Festival Opera; North Carolina Opera;	2019; '17;
		Opera Santa Barbara	'12;
Marthe	<i>Faust</i>	Opera San Antonio	2019
Maddalena	<i>Rigoletto</i>	San Diego Opera; Opera in the Heights	2019; '14
Rose	<i>The Flowers of Evil</i>	Mercury Chamber Orchestra	2019
Mrs. Catlett	<i>Amazing Grace</i>	Utah Festival Opera	2018
The Witch	<i>Into the Woods</i>	Utah Festival Opera	2018
Carmen	<i>The Tragedy of Carmen</i>	Opera Louisiana; Opera Birmingham	2018
Frugola/La Zia Principessa	<i>Il tritico</i>	Opera Delaware	2018
La Zia Principessa/Ciesca	<i>Il tritico</i>	Opera Company of Middlebury	2017
Tisbe	<i>La Cenerentola</i>	San Diego Opera; Fort Worth Opera, Opera NJ	2016; '09; '08
La Zia Principessa/Zita	<i>Suor Angelica/Gianni Schicchi</i>	Opera Santa Barbara	2016
Mother Goose	<i>The Rake's Progress</i>	Utah Opera	2015
Katisha	<i>The Mikado</i>	Summer Stock Theatre	2014
Mezzo Soloist	<i>River of Light</i>	Houston Grand Opera	2014
Dame Quickly	<i>Falstaff</i>	Opera in the Heights	2013
Cleo	<i>The Most Happy Fella</i>	Tulsa Opera	2013
Emelia	<i>Otello (Rossini)</i>	Opera Southwest	2012
Lampito	<i>Lysistrata</i>	Fort Worth Opera	2012
Society Woman	<i>The Last Savage</i>	Santa Fe Opera	2011
Baroness of Champigny	<i>The Italian Straw Hat</i>	Amarillo Opera	2011
Flora	<i>La traviata</i>	Santa Barbara, Sarasota, Pensacola, Nevada	2011,09,07,06
Mother	<i>Hansel and Gretel</i>	Santa Fe Concert Association	2011
Zulma	<i>L'italiana in Algeri</i>	Opera Southwest	2010
Florence Pike	<i>Albert Herring</i>	Santa Fe Opera	2010
Dritte Dame	<i>Die Zauberflöte</i>	Sarasota Opera	2010
Dritte Dame (cover)	<i>Die Zauberflöte</i>	Santa Fe Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera	2010, 2006
Santuzza (cover)	<i>Cavalleria rusticana</i>	Sarasota Opera	2010
Sandman	<i>Hansel and Gretel</i>	Sarasota Opera	2010
Carmen (Cover)	<i>Carmen</i>	Fort Worth Opera, Pensacola Opera	2009, 2006
Alisa	<i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>	Fort Worth Opera, Pensacola Opera	2008, 2006
Mother	<i>Amahl and the Night Visitors</i>	Fort Worth Opera	2007
Ruth	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	Opera New Jersey	2007
Mercedes	<i>Carmen</i>	Pensacola Opera	2006

CONCERT WORK

Soloist	Verdi <i>Requiem</i>	Houston Camerata	2017
Soloist	New Year's Eve Gala Concert	Opera Southwest	2016
Soloist	Adam's <i>Grand Pianola Music</i>	Dallas Symphony Orchestra	2015
Soloist	Haydn <i>Lord Nelson Mass</i>	Concordia University Symphony Orchestra	2014
Soloist	Verdi <i>Requiem</i>	University of Kentucky Symphony	2013
Soloist	Verdi <i>Requiem</i> – European Tour	Blue Lake International	2012
Soloist	Mahler <i>Symphony No. 2</i>	Rose Theatre, Lincoln Center, Hand in Hand Concerts	2012
Soloist	Feature Musical Theatre Concert	Santa Fe Concert Association	2012
Soloist	Verdi <i>Requiem</i>	University of North Texas Symphony Orchestra	2010

*cancelled due to COVID-19

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CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Sweeney Todd – Royal Danish Opera

"... it was left to an American Mrs Lovett, Alissa Anderson, to show the natives how it should be done. . . Anderson was the best of all of them. She has a true contralto voice that had no problems handling Mrs Lovett's sprawling range and mixture of lyricism and patter. Her comic timing was exemplary and her character's central shift from downtrodden pessimism to opportunistic enterprise was captured well. We felt the pathos of her situation in a compellingly sung "By the Sea" and in the layered sophistication of "Nothing's Going to Harm You," one of the score's most touching songs." -Opera News

The Love for Three Oranges – Opera Philadelphia

"Two distinctive, highly stageworthy mezzos made company debuts—Alissa Anderson, as a Princess Anne-style Clarissa..."
-Opera News

"All were notable and deserving of mention, but I was especially impressed by the four leading female roles. . . and contralto Alissa Anderson as Princess Clarissa, the king's scheming niece, menacing in fox-hunting attire." -Bachtrack

"Alissa Anderson, a fast-rising contralto, deserves to graduate to a more substantial assignment than the one she's given here, as the King's conniving niece who plots to usurp the throne for herself." -Broad Street Review

"Texas contralto Alissa Anderson, on whose Maddalena I had reported earlier this year was the villainous Princess Clarice. . . Both Altman and Anderson were persuasive in their vocal projection of evil intent." -Opera Warhorses

"As the plotting duo Princess Clarissa and Leander, Alissa Anderson and Zachary Altman oozed mellifluous malintent. Ms. Anderson's generous, throbbing mezzo made the most of her every utterance" -Opera Today

Le nozze di Figaro – Utah Festival Opera

"Alissa Anderson, who plays Marcellina, finishes the triad of female strength in the show. While at first she seems antagonistic, she later gives her support to Figaro and Susanna. Marcellina is a stalwart and stubborn character, but once she accepts you into her heart she will fight tooth and nail for you. In a show of female solidarity, she speaks against her own son with an eye roll saying, "A woman must defend all women from men's oppression"". -Front Row Reviewers

Into the Woods – Utah Festival Opera

"In terms of powerhouse vocal performances, Olivia Yokers and Alissa Anderson share the spotlight as Cinderella and the Wicked Witch respectively...Ms. Anderson uses the breathtaking range and strength of her operatic mezzo-soprano voice to blow the doors off the Eccles Theatre and nearly succeeds." -The Herald Journal

"Anderson played her own version of the Witch (and not a Bernadette Peters imitation). You see her love for Rapunzel, but you also see her vindictive nature bubble up from time to time. She is cynical and that leads to her be the prototypical over protective parent. Her "Children Will Listen" is part parental lament and warning to Baker as he raises his son."

-Front Row Reviewers Utah

"Alissa Anderson was especially fine as the witch"

-Deseret News

Il tritico – Opera Delaware

"All three Tabarro principals acted (and interacted) very credibly. . . Equipped with healthy chest voice, Alissa Anderson charmed the audience with Frugola's antics . . . Calenos and Anderson returned after intermission as the familial antagonists of Suor Angelica. Though both striking women, by force of character projection they seemed completely different beings than as Giorgietta and Frugola. . . Anderson, again favoring the contralto end of things, scored every possible point textually and in detailed stance and movement."

-Opera News

Tragedy of Carmen – Opera Birmingham

"three redeeming features make this production worthwhile. . . Second is the cast. . . Portraying a voluptuous Carmen, contralto Alissa Anderson sang the "Habanera" with power and passion as she searched for Don José, soon after presenting a more reflective "Seguidilla.""

-Artsbham.com

"The smoldering Alissa Anderson breathed life into Carmen, a gypsy "hostess" giving her unquenchable affection for the right price. Anderson provided a bellowing voice with sensuality. Her skilled seductions lead to danger when a soldier becomes lost in Carmen's raw attraction."
-Broadway World

Suor Angelica – Opera Company of Middlebury

"Contralto Alissa Anderson had great presence, vocally and physically, as La Principessa" -Rutland Herald

Le nozze di Figaro – North Carolina Opera

"Contralto Alissa Anderson was the rare Marcellina who was in no danger of retiring—or who sounded as though she should retire—before the end of the performance. In the hilarious Act One duet with Susanna, Anderson sang 'Via, resti servita, madama brillante' splendidly, the voice firm, focused, and filling the theatre with golden sound. Later, her entry with Bartolo and Basilio into the raucous ensemble of the Act Two finale had the force of a sudden tempest, her voicing of 'Voi Signor! che giusto siete' bursting forth like a thunderclap. Not even on the most acclaimed recordings of Le nozze di Figaro is Marcellina's 'Riconosci in questo amplesso una madre, amato figlio' in the Act Three sextet sung as well as Anderson sang it in Raleigh. Like Henderson's Basilio, Anderson's Marcellina was unfortunately deprived of her Act Four aria, 'Il capro e la capretta son sempre in amistà,' but the singer garnered a spontaneous ovation with her adrenalized vow to defend her sex by warning Susanna of looming peril. Even without the aria, Anderson was an extraordinarily enjoyable Marcellina, one who truly sang the role. Without a singer of Anderson's abilities in the part, how many audiences never fully appreciate how enchanting Marcellina's music can be?"
-Voix des Arts

"The cast was superb from the beginning to the end. . . Alissa Anderson sang a saucy Marcellina and was ideally matched with Hartmann's Bartolo for maximum comedic effect and Mozartian charm."
-Classical Voice North Carolina

Gianni Schicchi/Suor Angelica – Opera Santa Barbara

"The ensemble rose to the challenge of this fast-paced farce by displaying a seemingly effortless but no doubt hard-earned cohesion throughout the work's multiple shifts in mood. . . Alissa Anderson, as the Principessa, achieved an equal dignity even in an unsympathetic role, lending significant gravitas to the proceedings. The meeting of these two unstoppable forces—social censure and spiritual yearning—issued in transcendent music."
-Santa Barbara Independent

The Rake's Progress – Utah Opera

"Jill Grove and Alissa Anderson, as Baba the Turk and Mother Goose, added memorable vitality to their roles."
-Sara Neal, The Utah Review

Rigoletto – Opera in the Heights

"Mezzo-soprano Alissa Anderson brought an earthy voice and bearing to Maddalena, Sparfucile's sister and accomplice."
- Steven Brown, Houston Chronicle

"The supporting players were well limned, especially mezzo Alissa Anderson as earthy slut Maddalena. . . "
-D.L. Groover, Houston Press

Song Recital – Voces Intimae – Dallas, TX

"She delivered powerful vocalism, with a chest voice that many a baritone would be proud to own . . . "
- Scott Cantrell, Dallas Morning News

Falstaff – Opera in the Heights

"Mistress Quickly (mezzo Alissa Anderson, comically perfect) delivers the billets-doux to Falstaff with false flattery and a flash of ample bosom to snare him . . . "
- Houston Press Blogs

"Alissa Anderson's mezzo soprano instrument is on gorgeous display as she gracefully and proactively charms Falstaff and the audience alike . . . "
- BroadwayWorld.com

Lysistrata – Fort Worth Opera

"Ms. Anderson pranced about as an amazon-like general's wife and brought down the house with her Elmer Fudd accent."
- Pegasus News

"Mezzo soprano Alissa Anderson was frighteningly formidable as Lampito, the chief of the Spartan women. . . "
- Dallas Front Row

"The most inspired comic creation is Lampito, the leader of the Spartan women, who issues severe proclamations in an accent that combines Zsa Zsa Gabor and Elmer Fudd. She is played straight-facedly here by statuesque mezzo-soprano Alissa Anderson whose commanding presence only makes her pronouncements more risible." - Fort Worth Weekly

Albert Herring – Santa Fe Opera

"The cover Florence was on in place of Jill Grove – Texan Alissa Anderson was splendid in every respect...impeccably prepared"
- www.briandickie.typepad.com

Verdi Requiem – Bass Hall – Fort Worth, TX:

"Mezzo Alissa Anderson supplied aptly rich tones and an awesome chest voice" - Scott Cantrell, Dallas Morning News

Die Zauberflöte – Sarasota Opera

"The three ladies were exceptionally strong . . . " - Gayle Williams, Sarasota Herald Tribune

"Abla Lynn Hamza, Sarah Asmar, and Alissa Anderson were standouts as the Three Ladies."
- June LaBell, Longboat Key Observer

"Among the strongest performances were the Three Ladies of Abla Lynn Hamza, Sarah Asmar, and Alissa Anderson. . . "
- John Fleming, Opera News

"The three ladies were excellent!" - Rex Hearn, Palm Beach Arts Paper

La Cenerentola – Fort Worth Opera

"powerful mezzo . . . deliciously over the top" - Scott Cantrell, Opera News

Lucia di Lammermoor – Fort Worth Opera

"Even Lucia's confidante Alisa gets sit-up-and-take-notice singing from mezzo Alissa Anderson."
-Scott Cantrell, Dallas Morning News

"Alissa Anderson held her own in scenes with Futral. I've had a chance to see her perform at several other opera functions and not only does she have the power and ability in her voice, she exhibits grace and charm as well!"
- Steve Smith, West & Clear Blog/Pegasus News

La Cenerentola – Opera New Jersey:

"As embodied with towering zeal by soprano Rebecca Kier and mezzo Alissa Anderson, Cinderella's evil stepsisters are wonderfully ridiculous creatures of vanity and entitlement, like Paris Hiltons in hoops skirts"
- Bradley Bamberger, The Star Ledger

"Alissa Anderson, who performed here last year in The Pirates of Penzance, and Rebecca Kier portray Tisbe and Clorinda with glittering voices and daring physicality worthy of Carol Burnett"
- Anita Donovan, The Times of Trenton

Amahl and the Night Visitors – Fort Worth Opera:

"As the mother, Alissa Anderson shone as bright as the star of Bethlehem, her gleaming tone and crisp vocal delivery a big delight of the show"
- Fort Worth Star Telegram