



Kai Rüütel-Pajula Mezzo-soprano



Estonian mezzo-soprano Kai Rüütel-Pajula has captivated audiences and critics alike with her rich, expressive voice and compelling stage presence. She has graced many of the world's leading opera houses, including the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, English National Opera, Dutch National Opera, Theater an der Wien, Teatro Real, Opera Vlaanderen, Gran Teatre del Liceu, Scottish Opera, Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse, and Dallas Opera. Renowned for her versatility and dramatic intensity, she has collaborated with some of today's most visionary stage directors, including Robert Carsen, Laurent Pelly, Keith Warner, and Calixto Bieito.

In the 2025/26 season, Rüütel-Pajula returns to the Grand Théâtre de Genève as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, and makes her debut at the Opéra National du Rhin as Die Botin in Korngold's *Das Wunder der Heliane*. On the concert stage, she performs Mahler's *Symphony No. 3* with the Vanemuine Symphony Orchestra, and appears in Berlioz *Roméo et Juliette* in concert with the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra.

In the 2024/25 season, she made her company and role debut as Polina in *The Queen of Spades* at the Hamburg State Opera; returned to the role of Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* at the Teatro Municipal de Santiago de Chile; and sang Fricka in *Die Walküre* at Theater Dortmund. In concert, she reunited with the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra to sing Haydn's *Harmoniemesse* and Mozart's *Vesperae solennes de confessore*.

In previous seasons, Rüütel returned to the Opéra National de Lyon as the Angel in Calixto Bieito's staged production of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and to the Grand Théâtre de Genève as Sonyetka in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. She also made her debut as Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Vladimir Jurowski, and sang Mahler's *Symphony No. 2* with the Ulster Orchestra and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra.

Other recent successes include her debut as Judith in *Bluebeard's Castle* at Opera Lyon; Fricka in *Die Walküre* at Theater Dortmund; Wellgunde in *Götterdämmerung* and the Second Lady in a new production of *Die Zauberflöte* at Opéra National de Paris; Smee's Wife in *Der Schmied von Gent*; Sonyetka in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*; Emilia in *Otello*; and Nefertiti in *Akhnaten*, all at Opera Vlaanderen. She also returned to Teatro Real as the Second Norn in *Götterdämmerung*; sang Emilia in *Otello* with the Royal Ballet and Opera on tour to Japan; Waltraute in *Die Walküre* at Dutch National Opera; Lyubasha in *The Tsar's Bride* and the title role in *Carmen*, both at Estonian National Opera; and returned to Theater an der Wien alongside Christian Gerhaher in a staged production of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. Further highlights include her returns to the Royal Ballet and Opera as Waltraute in *Die Walküre*; Meg Page in *Falstaff* and Blanche in *The Gambler* — both new productions presented by Opera Vlaanderen; and Zweite Dame in *Die Zauberflöte* at Theater an der Wien.

Other highlights include her U.S. operatic debut as Olga in *Eugene Onegin* with Dallas Opera; Mary in *Der fliegende Holländer* and Flowermaiden/Esquire in *Parsifal* at Teatro Real; Emilia in new productions of *Otello* at the Royal Ballet and Opera and at Opera Vlaanderen; the world premiere of *Infinite Now* by American-Israeli composer Chaya Czernowin at Opera Vlaanderen; Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel* at Scottish Opera; Blanche in *The Gambler* at De Nederlandse Opera; Siegrune in *Die Walküre* at Gran Teatre del Liceu; Anina in *Der*

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Rosenkavalier at Dutch National Opera; and Kate Julian in *Owen Wingrave* at Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse.

Recent concert and recital performances include Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Vasily Petrenko, and at the Three Choirs Festival; Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* with the MDR Rundfunkchor under the baton of Dennis Russell Davies; Mahler's *Rückert-Lieder* with Opera Vlaanderen; her Estonian recital debut, accompanied by Roger Vignoles; her U.S. debut with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra singing Mozart's *Requiem*; a recital with Roger Vignoles at Oxford Lieder; the *Stars of Operalia* gala at the Birgitta Festival; an opera gala concert with Simon O'Neill at the Mumbai National Centre for the Performing Arts; *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra; Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Residentie Orkest of the Netherlands; Mahler's *Rückert-Lieder* at Cadogan Hall; Beethoven's *Mass in C* with the City of Birmingham Symphony and Philharmonia Orchestras; Zemlinsky's *Sechs Gesänge* at the Philharmonie Berlin; and gala concerts in Latvia, the Czech Republic, and with the RTÉ Orchestra under John Wilson.

Rüütel-Pajula studied at the Georg Ots Music School in Tallinn, the Koninklijk Conservatorium in The Hague, the Dutch National Opera Academy, and was a Jette Parker Young Artist from 2009 to 2011.

Kai Rüütel-Pajula is represented by MWA Management worldwide.
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