

# Hedwig Fassbender

## Vita

### Singing

After first studying music education, musicology, philosophy, German literature, and piano in Cologne, Hedwig Fassbender studied singing with Ernst Haefliger at the conservatory in Munich. During her five-year commitment at both Theater Freiburg and Theater Basel, she sang many roles of the standard lyric mezzo-soprano repertoire, including *Cherubino*, *Hänsel*, *Nicklausse*, *Idamante*, *Rosina*, and *Octavian*, but also "Miss Donnithorne's Maggot" by Peter Maxwell Davies.

With these roles she became known as an excellent singing actress and soon began to guest in productions at the opera houses in Paris, Geneva, Lyon, Nancy, Frankfurt, Munich, Bordeaux, Brussels, Zurich. Thus, she extended her repertoire to include roles like *Carmen*, *Baba the Turk*, *Mère Marie*, *Fricka*, and *Judit*.

Since 2001 she has sung "Zwischenfach" roles, including the *Foreign Princess* in *Rusalka*, *Marschallin* in *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Marie* in *Wozzeck*, *Kundry* in *Parsifal* and many others. She gained special attention for her portrayal of *Kostelnička* in Janáček's "Jenufa". In 2001, her "gripping" interpretation of *Isolde* at the Saarbrücken State Theater was met with praise from both critics and public alike.

As her most formative artistic encounters she mentions *Kostelnička* in *Jenufa* under Kirill Petrenko, the *Foreign Princess* in *Rusalka* under Ivan Fischer, Bartók's *Judit* under Vladimir Jurowsky, *Kundry* under Adam Fischer, *The woman over 60* in "The Golden Dragon" under Peter Eötvös, "Das Lied von der Erde" under Armin Jordan and her roles during the intense collaboration with Herbert Wernicke at the Theater Basel in the 90s.

Her **discography** includes *Isolde* in the complete recording of "Tristan and Isolde" with Leif Segerstam conducting (Naxos), Mahler's "Song of the Earth" under Armin Jordan, Zemlinsky's *Maeterlinck Songs* under Vaclav Neumann and the album "Songs of Life and Love" by Richard Strauss with Hilko Dumno at the piano.

### Teaching

Hedwig Fassbender is one of the most successful voice teachers of her generation. From 1999 to 2017 she held a professorship at the Conservatory of Music and Performing Arts in Frankfurt. Among the graduates of her class are a number of outstanding young singers, including Ruzan Mantashyan, Björn

Bürger, Kateryna Kasper, Kateryna Magiera, Stine Marie Fischer and Sebastian Kohlhepp.

She regularly teaches **masterclasses** within the young artist programs and opera studios of the Bolshoi Theater, the Zurich Opera, the Frankfurt Opera, the Hannover Opera, the Academy at the Teater Wielki in Warsaw, and with the Opera Academy of the Paris Opera.

In 2014, she developed the "**Exzellenz-Labor Gesang// Oper**" (**ExLab Opera**), a high-intensity masterclass in musical style and performance training, which under her artistic direction has grown into a renowned institution.

## Coaching

Since 2016, Hedwig Fassbender provides, as a **Certified Systemic Coach** support to artists both on and off-stage, who find themselves at a turning point in their careers. Using her knowledge gained as a vocal pedagogue and professor, she also provides assistance to those who wish to apply for a professorship at a conservatory.

(Updated August 2019)