



Julia Sophie Wagner, soprano

"As already in her recital CD with songs by Charles Ives, the polyglot singer impresses not only with her well-focused, clear voice but also with her vocal range and art of interpretive nuance" Klassik Heute writes about the recording of songs by Federico Mompou.

Versatility has been the hallmark of the artistic career of Julia Sophie Wagner. Trained in the baroque vocal polyphony of Johann Sebastian Bach, she has since found her expressive home in the great classical and romantic repertoire as well, with a voice *"bell-bright and distinctive"* (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*) and *"lyrically radiant, with a wonderfully timbred middle register"* (*Online Merker*).

In recent years, Julia Sophie Wagner has expanded her repertoire to include key works of late Romanticism and early Modernism, further refining her vocal identity within the romantic repertoire. She has performed Richard Strauss' *Four Last Songs* multiple times, including with the Romanian National Orchestra Cluj, where she returned in 2025 for a widely acclaimed concert featuring excerpts from *Salome*. The press hailed her for her *"distinctive timbre, a voice balanced between lyric and dramatic qualities, effortlessly navigating the high tessitura, generating intense emotions and profound feelings. Through Julia Sophie Wagner's voice, Salome was both seduction and triumph in art."*

Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 8 (*Una poenitentiam*) has also become part of her repertoire. A recording made as part of the Mahler-Scartazzini cycle with the Jena Philharmonic was released on CD in 2025.

Her 2025/26 season includes Mendelssohn's *Elias* at the Berlin Philharmonie (with the Brandenburg State Orchestra Frankfurt conducted by Gregor Meyer), recital and chamber music appearances at the Leipzig Bach Festival and at the Gewandhaus together with Steffen Schleiermacher, a CD production of orchestral songs by George Schurmann with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in Manchester, as well as performances at the Elbphilharmonie and Laeiszhalle Hamburg.

The busy schedule of the past season included performances at the Konzerthaus Blaibach, the Stuttgart Liederhalle, the Palau de la Música Valencia, and Mainz Cathedral, as well as performances Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with the Thomanerchor and the Gewandhausorchester at St. Thomas Church Leipzig. With the Jena Philharmonic she performed Haydn's *Scena di Berenice* under Hans-Christoph Rademann. Her recent contemporary music engagements included the world premiere and recording of Enjott Schneider's symphony *Die Glocke* for choir, orchestra and soprano (conducted by Gabriel Venzago), and a Heine-themed recital spanning Romantic to contemporary settings, broadcast by Deutschlandradio.

Large-scale choral symphonic works from Monteverdi to the present day form the foundation of her concert work. Her debut at the Kennedy Center in Washington with Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* was named "Kennedy Center Event of the Year" by *Washington Life Magazine*. Since then, she has performed with renowned orchestras including the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, the Washington National Symphony Orchestra, the Munich Chamber Orchestra, the Berlin Radio Orchestra, RTVE Madrid and RAI Turin. Collaborations with conductors such as Matthew Halls,

Jakob Lehmann, Christoph Spering, Alexander Liebreich, Ulf Schirmer, Helmuth Rilling, Raphael Pichon, Paul Mann, Hans-Christoph Rademann and Václav Luks have taken her to major concert halls across Europe, as well as to Asia, the US and South America – including the Teatro Colón Buenos Aires, the Kennedy Center, Gran Teatre del Liceu Barcelona, Salzburg Festival Hall, Tonhalle Zurich and the Berlin Philharmonie.

Opera continues to be a vital facet of her artistry as well. At Oper Leipzig she has appeared as Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and as Friederike in the acclaimed world premiere of Gerd Kühr's *Paradiese*, amongst others. Her discography includes several recordings of leading and title roles.

Julia Sophie Wagner traces her artistic roots to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. Early in her career, she was profoundly shaped by an enduring artistic collaboration with Helmuth Rilling. She enjoys a long-standing collaboration with the Thomanerchor Leipzig and the Gewandhaus Orchestra, and has also worked with specialist ensembles such as the Bachstiftung St. Gallen, Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, RIAS Kammerchor and the Munich Bach Choir. She is a regular guest at festivals including the Leipzig Bach Festival, the Thuringia Bach Weeks and the Oregon Bach Festival, where she appears both in her own programmes and as a soloist in various formations. In 2021 she was appointed to the board of the Neue Bachgesellschaft e. V.

Her recital work has taken her across Germany, including appearances at the Leipzig Bach Festival and the Kissinger Sommer, as well as to the Tonhalle Zurich, the Leipzig Gewandhaus, to Japan and the USA. She maintains a long-standing artistic partnership with pianist Eric Schneider. Following their CD *Leipziger Schule*, numerous further programmes have emerged, often in dialogue with poetry or staged elements.

Julia Sophie Wagner is also deeply involved in contemporary music, working closely with Leipzig-based composer and pianist Steffen Schleiermacher. Following solo albums featuring songs by Charles Ives and Federico Mompou, their most recent release is a vinyl LP of Schleiermacher's settings of texts by Eichendorff. Together with Ensemble Avantgarde, she regularly appears on stage, in the studio and on camera. She has also featured in several music documentaries for ARTE, 3Sat and international broadcasters – most recently in a film about Arnold Schönberg for ARTE and ORF.

Julia frequently develops her own, often interdisciplinary projects. From music videos and concept albums to the children's music theatre production *Prinzessin Elise oder: Märchenprinzen singen auch*, presented at the Leipzig Gewandhaus and in the USA (also released as a radio play by Deutschlandfunk Kultur and on CD). Most recently, she co-created the Bach Requiem *ET LUX* with conductor Jakob Lehmann and newly commissioned texts by poet Thomas Kunst. After its premiere at the Thüringer Bachwochen, the project was performed again at the Leipzig Bach Festival and has since received wide radio coverage.

Julia Sophie Wagner studied voice performance at the Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt in Weimar, at McGill University in Montreal with Lucile Evans, and at the University of Music and Theatre Leipzig with Hans-Joachim Beyer. She has also received artistic inspiration through masterclasses with Edith Wiens, Peter Schreier, Ingrid Figur, and Graham Johnson. She is a prizewinner of several national and international competitions – including the International Mozart Competition in Prague, the Paula Salomon Lindberg Competition for Contemporary Song, and the Lortzing Competition and was awarded a DAAD scholarship.