BETTINA RANCH Mezzo-soprano

"Breathless physical and vocal presence" – this is how the jury of the German Theatre Award DER FAUST describes Bettina Ranch in its official statement.

Mezzo-soprano Bettina Ranch was awarded the German Theatre Award DER FAUST in 2025 for her interpretation of Kundry in Richard Wagner's Parsifal in Roland Schwab's new production at Aalto-Musiktheater Essen.

Bettina Ranch is particularly at home in the dramatic mezzo-soprano repertoire. Her core roles include Brangäne (Tristan und Isolde), Fricka (Der Ring des Nibelungen), Amneris (Aida), Preziosilla (La forza del destino) and Santuzza (Cavalleria rusticana). She also regularly performs major concert repertoire, including works by Mahler, Beethoven and Verdi.

In the 2026/27 season, she takes on the role of Ortrud in Wagner's Lohengrin for the first time at Aalto-Musiktheater Essen under the direction of General Music Director Andrea Sanguineti (director: Tatjana Gürbaca). Further role debuts follow as Die Botin in Korngold's Das Wunder der Heliane (director: Elisabeth Stöppler), as well as in the world premiere of Outi Tarkianinen's Day of Night under the musical direction of Jonathan Stockhammer (director: Pauliina Feodoroff). She will also return as Kundry in Wagner's Parsifal with the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra in Vilnius and perform Beethoven's Missa solemnis with the Prague Symphony Orchestra at the Prague Spring International Music Festival 2027 under Tomáš Netopil.

Her recent engagements include Fricka in the new Ring des Nibelungen at Oper Köln under Marc Albrecht (director: Paul-Georg Dittrich), Gertrud (Hänsel und Gretel) and Kundry (Parsifal) at Aalto-Musiktheater Essen, as well as Santuzza (Cavalleria rusticana) in concert with the Philharmonisches Orchester Kiel. These were joined by performances of Verdi's Messa da Requiem, including with the Essener Philharmoniker under Andrea Sanguineti, as well as Rossini's Stabat Mater at the IMAD Festival Paderborn.

Further Wagner roles took her to Beijing as Fricka (Das Rheingold) on a guest tour (director: Stefano Poda, musical direction: Lü Jia), as well as to the Shanghai Grand Theatre as Brangäne (Tristan und Isolde) in Roland Schwab's Bayreuther Festspiele production. She has also appeared as a guest at venues including Staatsoper Unter den Linden Berlin, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Komische Oper Berlin, Oper Köln, Staatsoper Hamburg, Grand Théâtre de la Ville de Luxembourg and Dutch National Opera Amsterdam.

Bettina Ranch has been a member of the ensemble at Aalto-Musiktheater Essen since the 2016/17 season. There, she has developed a versatile repertoire that includes roles such as Carmen, Fricka (Die Walküre), Adalgisa (Norma), Maddalena (Rigoletto), Fenena (Nabucco), Dorabella (Così fan tutte), Annina (Der Rosenkavalier), Adelaide (Arabella), as well as La Zia Principessa and La Frugola in Puccini's Il trittico. She has also sung the title role in Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice and Cain in Scarlatti's Cain und Abel.

Her concert repertoire includes, among other works, Mozart's major masses, Bach's Passions and Mass in B minor, Handel's Messias, Beethoven's Missa solemnis, Mendelssohn's Elias and Lobgesang, Schumann's Das Paradies und die Peri, Verdi's Messa da Requiem, Dvořák's Stabat Mater, Bruckner's Te Deum, Wagner's Wesendonck-Lieder, as well as works by Gustav Mahler, Franz Schmidt and Luigi Nono. She made her debut at the Salzburger Festspiele with Nono's Il canto sospeso.

She has worked with orchestras including the Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg, the Dresdner Philharmonie, the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, the SWR Symphonieorchester, the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, the Mozarteumorchester Salzburg and the RTVE-Sinfonieorchester Madrid. Conductors with whom she has performed include Simone Young, Hartmut Haenchen, Tomáš Netopil, Markus Poschner, Helmuth Rilling, Ivor Bolton, Marc Albrecht and Michael Sanderling.

Bettina Ranch also regularly performs in Italy, most recently with Mahler's 8th Symphony (Mulier Samaritana) in Milan Cathedral with the Orchestra Sinfonica e Coro Sinfonico di Milano, as well as with Mozart's Requiem and Mahler's 2nd Symphony at the Auditorium di Milano.

Numerous CD recordings document her artistic work, including Franz Schmidt's Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln (Oehms Classics) with the Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg under Simone Young, Haydn's Il ritorno di Tobia (Sony Classical) with the Mozarteumorchester Salzburg under Ivor Bolton, as well as Mahler's 2nd and 3rd Symphonies (Oehms Classics, 2022 and 2023) under Tomáš Netopil.

Bettina Ranch initially studied violin before turning to singing. She is currently coached artistically by vocal teacher Caroline Merz.

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