



Mezzo-soprano **JUDITA LEITAITE**

is among the most exciting, creative and widely recognized soloists of the National Philharmonic Society of Lithuania. Her concert career started when she was still a student. Success at international competitions – M. Glinka Vocal Competition in Baku (1987) and the International Vocal Competition in Finland in 1991 – prompted her further career. After graduating from the Lithuanian Academy of Music with honours, Judita Leitaite began to work at the National Philharmonic Society of Lithuania.

Ms. Judita Leitaite performs regularly throughout her native Lithuania. She is on demand not only on the main concert stages, but also various radio and TV programs, schools, orphanages, churches, benefit concerts, as well, as jazz concerts and religious events.

In 1996 she participated in concerts for children-victims of Chernobyl as part of a Swedish program “Star of Hope”. In 1996 in Finland and in 1998 in Germany joined by pianist Grazina Rucyte-Landsbergiene, Judita Leitaite participated in the lectures on Lithuanian music culture presented by Prof. Vytautas Landsbergis. She has made successful appearances in festivals such as "Wratislavia Cantans" (1995, Wroclaw, Poland); Artgenda (1996, Copenhagen, Denmark); "Baltic Music Fest" (1997, Norrtälje, Sweden); the festival of contemporary music Gaida (1998, Vilnius, Lithuania); Vilnius Festival' 99 (Lithuania); "The International Festival of Jewish Music" (2000, London, UK). Her performance at the "Baltic Music Fest" in Sweden was a true sensation. Svenska Sanomat wrote: “The audience was charmed not only by the beauty of the voice of the fabulous vocalist Judita Leitaite, but also by her compelling musical rendering”. In 1997 she participated at the celebration at the Palace of the King of Sweden, “Music on the water” (1997, Stockholm, Sweden). In 1998 she became the "Summer Star" of the "Newport Music Festival" in the USA. “The audience received the Lithuanian mezzo-soprano Judita Leitaite with standing ovations”, wrote the Newport press. “The North American debut of the Lithuanian mezzo-soprano Judita Leitaite was greeted by thunderous ovations”, wrote the Newport festival newspaper "Newport This Week".

Judita Leitaite has toured Scandinavia and the former Soviet Union, Germany, France, Holland, Poland, Israel, Great Britain, USA, and the South African Republic. Among Leitaite's concert partners are the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, Vilnius String Quartet, Ciurlionis String Quartet, Lithuanian and international pianists and organists. She has studied and collaborated with renowned musicians – Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Carlo Bergonzi, Tom Kraus, Jeffrey Goldberg; conductors such as Lord Yehudi Menuhin, Saulius Sondeckis, conducting Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, Juozas Domarkas, and Leo Botstein (USA) conducting the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, and Caren Orbelian conducting the Moscow Chamber Orchestra. In 1997 she appeared as Jocasta in Igor Stravinsky's Oedipus Rex in Klaipeda's Musical Theatre.

The music press has described Judita Leitaite as an exceptionally creative and productive musician. Constantly renewing her repertoire, she explores and introduces new and seldom performed music. Her concert programs feature works for voice and piano, voice and orchestra, and voice and string quartet - spanning from the Baroque epoch to opuses of contemporary composers. She has designed and performed programs of art songs - Lithuanian, Italian, Scandinavian and Jewish, also Russian romances, French chansons, as well as sacred music, and music of women composers (concert programs “Women composers”, “Musica sacra”, “Portraits of Famous Singers”, “Times of Marlen Dietrich”). She has taken part in performances of the Mass in b minor by J.S.Bach; “Judas Maccabeus” and the “Messiah” by Händel; “Samson and Dalila” by Saint –Säens; Kindertotenlieder by G.Mahler; “Carmen” by G.Bizet; "Phaedra" by B.Britten; and Requiem by O.Balakauskas. Judita Leitaite is rated as one of the most exciting and creative interpreters of Lithuanian contemporary music. She has premiered works by O.Balakauskas, V.Laurusas, A.Senderovas and M.Urbaitis.

Judita Leitaite has made over 200 recordings for Lithuanian and Finish Radio, and has released 10 CDs. She was the first among Lithuanian singers to record a portrait CD “My Most Favourite Scandinavian Songs”, released in Finland in 1995.

In 2004 for her „Contribution to Lithuania“ President of Lithuania decorated Judita Leitaite with the „Knight's Cross“.