

Julia Lezhneva, Soprano

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"... sublime cantilenas with ornaments woven in like silver threads, trampoline-springing staccati and evenly swinging trills ... Even more haunting, how she knew how to use the messa di voce, the rising and falling of the tone, as an expression of emotional tremor." (FAZ, May 2021) The Süddeutsche Zeitung sees her as a "...magician: she can almost make her voice disappear, performing the most ludicrous vocal feats and garland fireworks".

Julia Lezhneva's international career began with a bang when she caused a sensation in 2010 at the Classical Brit Awards in London's Royal Albert Hall with Rossini's *Fra il padre* at the invitation of Dame Kiri Te Kanawa.

Just a decade later, she is discovering a broad repertoire with various orchestras, conductors, operas and oratorios. She made her highly successful debuts with the Berliner Philharmoniker in October 2019 and at the Musikverein Vienna in December 2019. She returned to the Mozartwoche Salzburg in January 2020, this time under Sir András Schiff in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*; in January 2023 she sang in *Don Giovanni*. In June 2023, she appeared for the first time at La Scala in Milan in Porpora's *Carlo il Calvo*.

In December 2020, she made her celebrated debut with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Herbert Blomstedt. In the 2024/25 season, she made her debuts with, among others, the LA Philharmonic, the Atlanta Symphony, and Amsterdam Baroque with Ton Koopman. In the current 2025/26 season, her debuts include performances with the Concertgebouw Orchestra and Klaus Mäkelä, the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra with Giovanni Antoni, and the Budapest Festival Orchestra with Ivan Fischer.

Orchestras such as the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, the Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin (RSB), the Bamberger Symphoniker, the Orquestra Nacional de España, the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, the Kaohsiung Philharmonic and the Seoul Philharmonic invite Julia Lezhneva and she regularly works with renowned conductors such as Adam Fischer, Giovanni Antonini, Herbert Blomstedt, Emmanuelle Haïm, Paavo Järvi, Vladimir Jurowski and Andrea Marcon.

Julia Lezhneva is a welcome guest at the Salzburg Festival, the Schwetzingen Festival, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, the Lucerne Festival, the Dubrovnik Festival, the Festival de la Vézère, the Sion Festival, the Nordland Music Festival and at Bayreuth Baroque.

Julia Lezhneva's debut in Handel's *Alcina* (Morgana) at the Hamburg State Opera in September 2018 was celebrated to great acclaim and she was immediately invited back for Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and further performances of *Alcina*. In 2021, she sang the role of Poppea in a new production of Handel's *Agrippina* (stage director: by Barrie Kosky), in 2022 she performed Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, and in May 2024 she made her debut as Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. In March 2024, she debuted at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona in a staged performance of Handel's *Messiah* (directed by Robert Wilson) and was immediately engaged to perform Cherubino there in Spring 2026.

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In 2024, she also made her debut at the Opéra Royal du Château de Versailles as Galatea in Porpora's *Polifemo* (production by Justin Way). She is a regular guest at Bayreuth Baroque, performing roles in Porpora's *Polifemo* and *Carlo il Calvo* as well as Handel's *Poro* and *Flavio*.

Julia Lezhneva regularly gives recitals. Her repertoire includes songs and arias by Russian, English, Italian, and German composers. She made her debut with pianist Helmut Deutsch in October 2024 at the Brucknerhaus in Linz. Since 2025, she has also presented her recital program *The Golden Age* for the first time, accompanied by lutenist Luca Pianca. In 2025, she released the album *Visiting Rachmaninoff* with pianist Alexander Melnikov on Harmonia Mundi. Their concerts have included appearances at the Kölner Philharmonie and the Pierre Boulez Saal in Berlin.

Julia Lezhneva records exclusively for DECCA Records. In April 2017, she released her most recent solo album with Concerto Köln, featuring arias by Carl Heinrich Graun, which earned her the OPUS Klassik award in 2018. Her most recent recordings include Hasse's *Serpentes Ignei in Deserto* (2024), Porpora's *Polifemo* and *Carlo il Calvo* (2023), Vivaldi's *Gloria* with Franco Fagioli and Diego Fasolis (2018), Porpora's *Germanico in Germania* with Max Emanuel Cencic (2018), Handel arias with Il Giardino Armonico (2015), and her acclaimed debut album *Alleluia*, also with Il Giardino Armonico (2014). She also recorded Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* with Philippe Jaroussky, Diego Fasolis, and I Barocchisti (2013). In 2025, Hasse's oratorio *Les Serpentes* was released on Warner/ERATO, featuring Les Accents, Thibault Noally, Philippe Jaroussky, Jakub Orlinski, Bruno de Sá, and David Hansen.

Born in 1989 in a family of geophysicists on Sakhalin Island off the Pacific Coast of Russia, Ms. Lezhneva began playing piano and singing at the age of five. She graduated from the Gretchaninov Music School and continued her vocal and piano studies at the Moscow Conservatory Academic Music College. At 17 she came to international attention as the winner of the *Elena Obraztsova Opera Singers Competition*, and was invited to share the stage with Juan Diego Flórez at the opening of the *Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro* in the following year. In 2009, she won the first prize at the *Mirjam Helin International Singing Competition* in Helsinki and the following year took first prize at the *Paris International Opera Competition*, as the youngest contestant in each competition's history. *Opernwelt* magazine named her "Young Singer of the Year" in 2011 for her debut at La Monnaie in Brussels. The following year she performed at the Victoires de la Musique Classique in Paris.

Julia Lezhneva's teachers and mentors include Dennis O'Neill, Yvonne Kenny, Elena Obraztsova, Alberto Zedda, Richard Bonyne and Thomas Quasthoff.

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