

Janelle DeStefano, mezzo soprano

American mezzo-soprano, **Janelle DeStefano**, enjoys the entire gamut of classical singing, from opera and oratorio to recital and chamber music. Praised for her “passionate delivery” and “rich seamless voice,” she has rendered dramatic performances in such diverse concert works as the Monteverdi *Vespers*, Bach’s *B minor Mass*, Handel’s *Dixit Dominus*, Mahler’s *Fourth Symphony*, Respighi’s *Laud to the Nativity*, Zeisl’s *Hebrew Requiem*, Szymanowsky’s *Stabat Mater* and the U.S. premier of Peter Eötvös, *Schiller: Energische Schoenheit*. She has been featured in concert with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra; Jacaranda Music at the Edge, El Mundo; Bach Collegium San Diego; and the Los Angeles Master Chorale. Equally comfortable on the opera stage, her roles include Romeo in *I Capuletti e i Montecchi*; Dido in *Dido and Aeneas*; and the title role in Britten’s *The Rape of Lucretia*.

Of her recent performances in the Bach *B minor Mass*, Stage and Cinema called it “saving the best for last,” and raved that “DeStefano soared into the heavens during her performance of the ‘Agnus Dei,’” and Ken Herman (San Diego Story) wrote that she “found poetry in the composer’s unrelenting florid roulades”, and that her “unflinching command of the beautifully-shaped line was impressive.” LA Opus called her performance in the *St John’s Passion*, “truly exceptional” and “superior to most other performances elsewhere.”

A personal interest in *zarzuela* and Spanish art song led to **Ms. DeStefano’s** European debut as part of the 2007 *International Festival of Interpretation of Spanish Song* in Granada, Spain, as well as a featured performance in the Spanish art song concert series for the 2008 Mannes Summer Institute in New York City. Her appearances with the Grammy®-nominated early music ensemble, El Mundo for the San Diego Early Music Society and the Da Camera Society received critical acclaim. **Ms. DeStefano’s** portrayal of the gypsy, Maria, in *La Alegria de la Huerta* at the Jarvis Zarzuela Festival (available on DVD) was hailed as the "pick of the Chueca" by Zarzuela.net.

Ms. DeStefano also appears as a soloist on the 2012 CD release of “*The Dream Gallery: Seven California Portraits*” by Mark Abel on the Delos Label; and as a member of the Grammy®-nominated Los Angeles Master Chorale, she appears on the 2012 release of Górecki: *Miserere* (Decca), and the Los Angeles Philharmonic’s 2014 recording of Adams: *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* (Deutsche Grammophon).

A passionate teacher, **Ms. DeStefano** is a Professor of Voice at Santa Monica College, where she also serves as Artistic Director for the SMC Opera, and coordinator of vocal activities. Prior to joining the SMC faculty, she taught music and voice for over two decades at collegiate and community music schools including the USC Thornton School, UC Santa Cruz, and the University of San Diego, as well as in her own private studio. Sought after for her gentle, yet disciplined methods, her students are currently performing on Broadway, and in major opera houses across the United States. **Ms. DeStefano** holds a Doctorate in Musical Arts, with honors, from USC; a Master of Music Degree in Voice Performance and Pedagogy from Westminster Choir College; and a Bachelor of Arts in Music, with honors, from UC Santa Cruz. As an undergraduate, she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and in 2010, was she was inducted into Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society. She is an active member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), and the American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO (AGMA). **Ms. DeStefano** currently makes her home in West Los Angeles, with her loving husband and their daughter, Graziana. ☪