



Johanna Meier legendary Wagnerian soprano

Born in [Chicago](#),^[2] Meier was raised in [Spearfish, South Dakota](#) and continues to contribute to the State, having founded the School of Opera and Vocal Arts as part of the [Black Hills State University](#) Summer Institute of the Arts, for which she also serves as [Artistic Director](#).^[1] As her family was touring with the Luenen [Passion Play](#) when she was born, she had her stage debut at five weeks and grew up playing various parts; she continued the family's tradition through 2008,^[3] staging the play with her husband each summer in Spearfish, with Meier playing the role of Mary.^[2]

Meier trained at the [University of Miami's Frost School of Music](#) and received the school's first Distinguished Alumnus Award.^[4] She also studied under [John Brownlee](#) at the [Manhattan School of Music](#) before beginning her professional career in 1969 at the [New York City Opera](#), where she sang [Mozart](#) roles, slowly adding in roles from [Richard Strauss's](#) operas before finally taking on the Wagnerian roles for which she is best

known.^[5] The City Opera recognized that she was talented both as a singer and as an actress and cast her in several leads.^[2]

Meier's debut at the Metropolitan Opera came earlier than planned: she had been scheduled to debut in December 1976, playing Marguerite in *Faust*, but was sent onstage in April as a last-minute replacement for **Montserrat Caballé** as Ariadne in *Ariadne auf Naxos*.^{[2][6]} During her fourteen years at the Met, she played fifteen roles, including **Chrysothemis**, **Senta**, **Leonore**, the **Empress**, the **Marschallin**, **Elisabeth**, **Ellen Orford**, **Donna Anna**, **Tosca**, **Sieglinde**, **Brünnhilde** and **Isolde**.^[2] Meier was seen in the title role of *Vanessa* (with **Christopher Keene** conducting), when it was televised from the **Spoletto Festival USA**, in 1978. She began her stint at Bayreuth in 1981 in the widely praised production by **Jean-Pierre Ponnelle** (q.v.); this production was eventually recorded on video.^[2] Her final professional performance, in 1994, was as **Elektra**.^[5]

In 2003, she received an honorary doctorate from Black Hills State University.^[1] She was married to Guido Della Vecchia from 1960 until his death in 2013.^[7] In January 2014, Meier was awarded the National Opera Association's Lifetime Achievement Award.^[8]

Above information is from Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johanna_Meier

<http://www.wagneropera.net/Interviews/Johanna-Meier-Interview.htm>

<http://www.bruceduffie.com/meier.html>

<http://www.noa.org/initiatives/lifetime-achievement/2014-johanna-meier.html>