

Stemming from the Swedish choral tradition, Swedish-Dutch singer Helena van Heel has developed into a many-sided mezzo-soprano with a velvety voice and ability to touch her audience deeply.

At an early age she joined the local children's choir in the northern Swedish mining town of Boliden. Going on to study at Piteå Conservatory, finishing with a Master's Degree in singing (cum laude) and music education, she subsequently sang with the Eric Ericson Chamber Choir, the Swedish Radio Choir and the Netherlands Chamber Choir.

At the time Helena studied and participated in masterclasses with Dalton Baldwin, Geoffrey Parsons, MariAnne Häggander, Folke Abenius (Stockholm), Paul Schilhawsky (Salzburg), Rudolf Jansen (Amsterdam) and Monika Hauswalter (Regensburg). Since 2016 she is guided by voice-teacher Jón Thorsteinsson (Iceland).

As a soloist Helena has a wide-ranging repertoire from Baroque to contemporary music. She sang with the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, Residentie Orkest The Hague, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, North Netherlands Symphony Orchestra, Arnhem Philharmonic Orchestra and the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra. She worked with the conductors Frans Brüggen, Eric Ericson, Reinbert de Leeuw, Peter Eötvös, Tõnu Kaljuste, Christoph Poppen and Risto Joost. Helena also appeared with the Asko/Schönberg Ensemble, Rietveld Ensemble, Barok Opera Amsterdam and Corelli Consort Tallinn. Festival appearances include the Donaueschinger Musiktage, the Gergiev Festival and the Holland Festival.

Helena van Heel is highly praised for her expressive interpretations of the great works of J.S. Bach as well as chamber music performances and Lied-recitals.

New highlights are Helena's own productions in which existing compositions are combined with pieces specially written for her by the composers Jeff Hamburg<sup>1</sup>, Max Knigge<sup>2</sup>, Willem Boogman<sup>3</sup> and Thomas Jennefelt<sup>4</sup>. Together with text writers, visual artists and directors, she has created an additional platform which gives shape to her love of music performance.

In December 2018 Helena released her first (Christmas) CD 'Ave maris stella'.

<sup>1</sup>Songs Along the Way (2018) - G. Mahler, Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (mezzo, three strings, clarinet and harp) <sup>2</sup>Chamber Music (2018) - H. Berlioz, Les nuits d'été (mezzo and string quartet) <sup>3</sup>Ariadne (2019) - J. Haydn, Arianna a Naxos (mezzo and accordeon) <sup>4</sup>XXXIV James Joyce (2018)