

# Leslie Middlebrook

M E Z Z O - S O P R A N O

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## Biography

Mezzo-Soprano, Leslie Middlebrook, has been winning recognition and acclaim throughout the United States and Europe from critics and audiences alike. She made a successful European opera debut in Bremen, Germany on a Menotti double-bill singing the leading roles of *Baba* in *The Medium* and *Miss Todd* in *The Old Maid and The Thief*. She also appeared at **The Bach to Bartok International Music Festival** in Imola, Italy where she made her recital debut at the historic Palazzo Tozzoni, and was alto soloist in Rossini's *Stabat Mater* and Verdi's *Requiem*. She was featured in the Austrian premiere of Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe* at the **Vienna Kammeroper**. In addition, Ms Middlebrook made her **Carnegie Hall** debut as alto soloist in the U.S. premiere of Sir Eugene Goosen's re-orchestration of *The Messiah* with **The New England Symphonic Ensemble**.

With many recent performances, Ms. Middlebrook has been establishing her credits as a Wagnerian Mezzo-Soprano. She has sung the roles of *Fricka* in *Das Rheingold*, *Waltraute* in *Die Walküre* and in *Götterdämmerung*, as well as *First Norn* in *Götterdämmerung* all with the **Wagner Festival Orchestra** conducted by David Gilbert, *Fricka* in *Die Walküre* and *First Norn* in *Götterdämmerung* with the **West End Opera** conducted by Roger Malouf, and *Brangäne* in *Tristan und Isolde* again with the **Wagner Festival Orchestra** and David Gilbert. She continues to build her Wagnerian repertoire, studying under the sponsorship of the Wagner Institute, directed by Patricia Sage. This season she will add *Mary* in *Der Fliegende Hollander*, and *Erda* in *Siegfried*.

In the U.S. Ms. Middlebrook has performed with such prestigious companies as: **The San Francisco Opera, Virginia Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Berkshire Opera, Harrisburg Opera, New Jersey Verismo Opera, West Coast Opera** (Palm Springs) and **The Colorado Gilbert and Sullivan Festival** in roles ranging from *Orlofsky* in *Die Fledermaus*, *Giglietta* in Mascagni's *Isabeau*, *Maddalena* in *Rigoletto*, to *Amneris* in *Aida* and *Katisha* in *The Mikado*. With over forty roles in her repertoire, critics have acclaimed her performances as "outstanding," "commanding" and "impressive."

Ms. Middlebrook's frequent concert and oratorio appearances include the duet version of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* with the **St. Thomas More Chamber Orchestra** with Harvey Burgett conducting as well as the world premiere of Margarita Zelenai's *Mother's Lamentations* for Mezzo-Soprano and Strings with **One World Symphony**, which was also broadcast on international satellite television. Other recent engagements include Rossini's *Petite Messe Solonelle* with **The Brooklyn Philharmonia**, *The Mozart Requiem* with Joseph Kubler conducting, a **Weill Hall** recital debut and concerts with the **Ragusa Music Festival** in Sicily.

2006-2007 began with concert appearances at the **Ondine International Festival** in Rusalka and Sofia, Bulgaria. She will reprise *Waltraute* in *Götterdämmerung* in a fully staged production with the **Wagner Festival Orchestra**, return as alto soloist in *The Messiah* with **The Hanson Place Chorale** of Brooklyn, and to the **Metropolitan Museum of Art** in a G&S Concert. Further concert engagements include a series of opera galas with *La Serenata* and a Southern tour of *A Victorian Evening of Romance, Poetry & Song*. Ms Middlebrook will again appear as the *Duchess* and the *Keeper of Knowledge* in a new musical theatre version of H.G Well's *The Time Machine*.

An accomplished actress, known for her comedic talents, Ms. Middlebrook's musical theatre credits range from a revival of Noel Coward's *Bittersweet* at **The Massachusetts International Festival of the Arts** to *Madame Pavlenko* (Margaret Dumont) in *A Day in Hollywood/A Night in the Ukraine* at the **Pioneer Theatre** in Salt Lake City. She appeared as *Mrs. Cratchit* in *A Christmas Carol* with New England Lyric Operetta at the **Rich Forum** in Stamford, Ct. with Neal Goren conducting, was also soloist in the *Best of G&S* with Skitch Henderson's NY Pops Orchestra at **Carnegie Hall**, and *The Duchess of Plaza Toro* in *The Gondoliers* at **John Jay Theatre**, F. Paul Driscoll directing. She can be heard as the *Dowager Empress Marie* and *Lenin's Wife* on the CD of the new musical theatre piece *Faberge*.

A native of New York City, Leslie Middlebrook received her Master of Music in Opera from Manhattan School of Music.

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"Gave a **riveting and decisive performance** in a complex role." — Weser Kurier, Bremen, Germany

"Leslie Middlebrook ...makes a striking entrance in the first act. She has a **commanding presence** and a rich confident voice." — The Denver Post

"With a **first rate voice** and **exceptional acting** ability Leslie Middlebrook was more than effective as part of the madness." — Richmond Times-Dispatch

"Leslie Middlebrook delivered charmingly in a **big, rich, textured mezzo-soprano with assured vocal technique and stage-craft to match**." — Frank Merklng, Arts Critic, Danbury News-Times

"Leslie Middlebrook's Mrs. McLean was **powerfully sung** as she got inside the character's never fully stated need to bring down beauty..." — Newark Star Ledger

"**Excellent** in her important supporting role was Leslie Middlebrook who portrayed Mrs. McLean, the meanest of the villagers." — Berkshire Gazette

"**Particularly entertaining and droll** was the domineering and angular Duchess of Leslie Middlebrook" — Savoynet