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Maria Knapik, soprano

Soprano Maria Knapik, who shines equally bright on the opera stage as in concert and oratorio, was awarded the 2005 International Rising Star of Opera Award by The American Institute of Polish Culture. She was also the 2003 winner of the Gerda Lissner Foundation vocal competition in New York City.

2007 opera highlights include the title role in *Suor Angelica* and Nedda in *I Pagliacci* both with The New York Grand Opera in its summer festival in New York's Central Park; Mimi in *La Bohème* with the Kingston Symphony, a highly acclaimed portrayal of the title role in Moniuszko's opera *Halka* with Sarasota Opera and Warsaw Opera and Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* with Opera Lyra Ottawa. Maria will also be releasing her eagerly anticipated CD of Slavic arias recorded with the Sofia Philharmonic.

Previous opera highlights have included, among others, Liu in *Turandot* with The New York Grand Opera in Central Park, the title role in Verdi's *Joan of Arc* at Carnegie Hall with The New York Grand Opera, Alice Ford in *Falstaff* with The State Opera in ,Ukraine as well as in its touring performances in Germany and Switzerland, Fiordiligi in *Così fan Tutte*, Mimi in *La Bohème* with the Jacksonville Symphony, the title role in *Tosca*, the title role of Verdi's *Alzira* at Carnegie Hall, Mimi in Leoncavallo's *La Bohème* all with New York Grand Opera under the baton of Vincent La Selva, the title role of Moniuszko's opera *The Countess* in Warsaw and the title role in *Manon Lescaut*. She was also invited by Licia Albanese to sing as a special Guest during the annual Puccini Foundation Concert at Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center.

2007 oratorio & concert engagements include Beethoven's *9th Symphony* and Gorecki's *3rd Symphony* in Carnegie Hall with the New York Grand Opera Orchestra, Poulenc's *Gloria* at The Kennedy Centre with the Royal Ballet of London and The Washington Chorus under Grammy winning director Robert Shafer. Maria will also be releasing her eagerly anticipated CD of Slavic arias recorded with the Sofia Philharmonic.

Previous concert engagements feature Beethoven's *9th Symphony* with the Krakow Philharmonic; Gorecki's *3rd Symphony* with The Ottawa Symphony, Strauss' *Four Last Songs* with The Winnipeg Symphony, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and Mendelsohn's *Elijah* with the Kingston Symphony, Handel's *Messiah* with Orchestre Baroque de Montreal, Bruckner's *Te Deum* and Beethoven's *Mass in C* with Kitchener-Waterloo Philharmonic, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* and Schubert's *Mass in C Major* with the University of Ottawa's Orchestra, Mozart's *Exultate Jubilate* with Britten-Pears Orchestra in Aldeburgh and The Peterborough Symphony, and Haydn's *Missa in Angustiis* with FMMC Orchestra and Choir in Washington.

Maria, originally from Poland, is the youngest of "The Eight Knapik Sisters" who performed more than 2800 concerts in tours of Europe and the British Isles. Since the age of five, Maria, with her sisters, regularly appeared on Polish Radio & TV.

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