

# Maria Luigia Borsi

The Italian soprano who has impressed Muti and is about to make her US debut

There are some sopranos who have to wait that little bit longer for their big break. Not many of them have to audition for the same high-flying conductor twice. But such was the case for the Italian Maria Luigia Borsi, who impressed Riccardo Muti in 2002 – but then a Sars epidemic in China put paid to the subsequent performances. So, five years on, she had to audition again. He didn't remember the first encounter but his reaction was the same and Borsi (whose teachers have included Claudio Desderi and Antonietta Stella) was hired for Muti casts in Salzburg and Rome.

And so Borsi's star continues to rise. She has also worked with the likes of Myung-Whun Chung, Lorin Maazel and Zubin Mehta. Rather less on the radar of those who read this magazine perhaps, she has toured with Andrea Bocelli.

And there is plenty on the horizon. *La bohème* at Barcelona's Liceu Opera House beckons, as does *Madama Butterfly* for the Royal Danish Opera. And, hard on the heels of her Wigmore Hall debut in London, there is the prospect of her American debut, as Verdi's Desdemona at Cincinnati Opera under the baton of Robert Spano this month.

With such distinguished supporters, there will be much interest focused on the US *Otello*. After all, Muti's previous discoveries have included Daniela Dessì, Tiziana Fabbricini and Roberto Alagna. So whatever happens to Maria Luigia Borsi, it seems as though it will be worth watching – and hearing. ©



**Name** Maria Luigia Borsi

**Plans** Desdemona in *Otello* with Cincinnati Opera (July 7-10), Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* for the Royal Danish Opera (Dec. 3, 2010 - Feb. 3, 2011)

**Photographed** at Handel House Museum, 25 Brook Street, London W1K 4HB

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(concerts every Thursday at 6.30pm)