

MS. Lakhe from ON STORE MAGAZIN (from the National Center for performing Arts Mumbai, India):

Dear Ms De Arellano,

we are looking forward to your performance in India. This is your very first trip to India, and you already have fans here. Tell us what you are going to perform.

**I will perform a group of Richard Strauss Lieder (songs in German) written from 1880; which reflects the period in German history as the "Gründerzeit"/a period of rapid industrial expansion in Germany-- these gems of songs depict the expansive movements of: realism, impressionism, Jugendstil (Art Nouveau), symbolism, neoromanticism, neoclassicism, expressionism.**

**Then to end the first half of the program, Charles Gounod's aria (1818-1893) from his opera Faust: "Jewel Song"/Marguerite's scene will be performed in its entirety and my brilliant pianist, Maciej Pikulski will accompany them as if an orchestra would be present.**

**The second half will be an homage to canciones (spanish song), beginning with Joaquin Rodrigo's "Cuatro Madrigales Amatorias". These 4 canciones were written inspired by the Spanish Madrigals of the 16th Century.**

**"La Maja Dolorosa 1,2,3" by Enrique Granados(1867-1916), are three songs written as an homage to Goya's famous painting "La Maja"; poetically resounding in melodious poems which paints exquisite texts of the yearning of a woman's loss of love.**

**To end the concert are the canciones of Joaquin Nin (1879-1949): Malagueña, Montañesa El paño Murciano, and Granadina-- all temperamental in their depiction of country life in the different regions Spain (Malaga, Cantabrian mountains, Murcia, and Granada).**

MS. Lakhe from ON STORE MAGAZIN:

How different is it singing in traditional opera houses as in Munich and Paris compared to modern ones in Miami? How does the history of the place affect your performance, if at all?

The Parisian opera house, La Bastille, is built in the style of a typical American opera house-- it is quite large and the architecture is modern as in the States. The Munich opera house is in fact a typical European opera house-- as the opera houses of Vienna, Stuttgart, Barcelona to name a few. It is the piece or work along with its interpretation, instigated by the director, which is what varies in the type of performance. American opera houses are now (about 10 years ago) trying out rather strange productions which the European houses refer to as "Regie-theater".

**I rather stick with the story of the opera, and to add nuances that bring a fresh approach to the work. As far as a total change in the opera story; I am still pretty sceptical and would rather see a new piece written than to change a masterpiece in order to serve the director's need which unfortunately sometimes is for a mere scandal.**

MS. Lakhe from ON STORE MAGAZIN:

You don't just sing like an angel but you have a flair for the dramatic as well. What do you prefer?

**Thank you for the "angel" compliment! I believe that the human voice is one of the most delicate organ that we possess. Humans have this gift to sing, communicate with words/text/poetry. Sometimes just a melody (a vocalise, a song based on just a humm or with no text) can also communicate the music's feeling. Communication is a very important facet to the music making process; it must be integrated with beautiful tones because just beauty is not enough.**

MS. Lakhe from ON STORE MAGAZIN:

Could you name your favorite pieces? Are we going to hear you sing La Tarantula?

Oh, you have unveiled the surprise of one of my encores... Yes, La Tarantula, a Spanish dance/Zapateado will be performed. It is a great play on words at great velocity. I remember a concert I attended back in my student days where the famous Spanish accompanist, Alicia de Larrocha and soprano, Victoria de los Angeles performed it: Spectacular!

As far as my favorite pieces; they are almost always the pieces that I perform at the moment! I love especially the operas of Verdi, Donizetti and Richard Strauss! I have just discovered my passion for Richard Strauss-- maybe also because I reside in the Richard Strauss Strasse (street) ;-)

MS. Lakhe from ON STORE MAGAZIN:

So much has been said about Lulu. Tell us about your experience.

**Lulu was indeed a great experience in my artistic life. I must say though that as great as it was, it also took me into a sort of "Lulu Trap".**

**I could not sing anything else for a long while. I performed the three act version (Cerha's version, which he finished from the Berg manuscript he left at his death bed) about 24 times and it was an epoch in my life that with only 1 to 2 days maximum rest inbetween performances, I had to really take care and be fit-- I do not want to repeat this circumstance again. It is all-**

consuming and one **MUST** be very concentrated; as the conductor I had for the first group of performances, **NEVER** gave me any cues. I had to learn the orchestra part and study the full partiture. It was a double task for me not only to sing, act, but very keenly listen as if I was my own conductor in order to come in properly and not make mistakes; as it is not the most melodious of pieces. Still, Lulu is indeed a masterpiece for which I am grateful to have sung!

MS. Lakhe from ON STORE MAGAZIN:

[Cuban music has influenced many, and its many rhythms and passion are incredible as well. How did you turn to the classical? Tell us something about your beginning as a singer and performer.](#)

**Indeed, the Cuban orchestra has all the instruments one would find in a Wagner orchestra (not doubled) and plus all percussion one could ever imagine. Rhythm is important--but I must say that Indian music with its rhythm is very virtuous as well if not more intricate with its beat/takt, of which I am much fascinated for.**

**My family heard all kinds of music, my father was a frustrated tenor and took me to his rehearsals at a very early age and I studied at the age of 16 formally with his voice teacher in Miami. I took ballet, piano and clarinet and saxophone lessons. Studied all the time while I went to school and worked to earn money as well. So, I was a very serious teenager with my goals and dreams. I auditioned after high school for various musical institutions (my high school teacher in Music, Mr. Roscoe Speed was an incredible asset to my talent development back then, which would like to mention as he was a very musical person and passed away some ten years ago-- and I will never forget him) and was accepted with a scholarship to the University of Miami and later graduated from the Juilliard Conservatory of Music in New York with a Master's degree.**

MS. Lakhe from ON STORE MAGAZIN:

[India too has a huge classical musical tradition, and families play a big part in pushing their kids to learn music from an early age. But the young people are turning more and more to the 'pop' culture for instant glamor. What would you like to say to them?](#)

**Pop Culture is the music of the Masses, and unfortunately it can bring instant wealth and some of this so-called music (again, not all) can really clog the ears.**

**I would say to the younger generation, "Expand your knowledge: learn all facets of music-- because learning its history is a great basis in order to be genuine and special in your own music making experience, whether it be modern, pop, jazz, classical, etc...!"**

**Zubin Mehta, a proud Indian who eats the most spicy food, is someone whom I cherish working with and absolutely love! He has brought me to great musical expansion and horizons!**

MS. Lakhe from ON STORE MAGAZIN:

[What are the roles you would love to perform and with whom?](#)

**I would love to perform Verdi, Donizetti, Richard Strauss Operas; but of course all operas that come my way I welcome. I also enjoyed performing at the Bastille last year (Paris National Opera) the role of Roxanna in Szymanowski's "King Roger".**

**Giving concerts such as the one Maciej Pikulki and myself will perform for you here are also incredible intimate venues which must be animated especially in our fast pacing culture of today! Thank you, and also for the opportunity to perform in your wonderful country!**

MS. Lakhe from ON STORE MAGAZIN:

[Thank you for answering the questions.](#)

Manisha Lakhe  
For On Stage magazine  
National Center for Performing Arts  
Mumbai, India

[manishalakhe@gmail.com](mailto:manishalakhe@gmail.com)  
+91 98214 22814