

= Maria Radner =

Maria Friderike Radner (German : [ʁaˈdɲɐ] ; 7 May 1981 – 24 March 2015) was a German contralto who performed internationally in opera and in concerts .

Radner studied at the Robert Schumann Hochschule in Düsseldorf , Germany . Both Stern magazine and Munich 's Abendzeitung described her as an " extremely talented interpreter of Wagner 's music " . Possessing the " rare pitch of a true alto " , she frequently appeared as Erda in Wagner 's Der Ring des Nibelungen at the Leipzig Opera , Schwertleite in Die Walküre at the Teatro Comunale di Firenze with Zubin Mehta , and in Mahler 's Symphony No. 2 (the Resurrection) conducted by Antonio Pappano in Rome and Milan . Her debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 2012 in Götterdämmerung was part of that company 's documentary Wagner 's Dream .

= = Early life and education (1981 – 2000) = =

Radner was born in Düsseldorf and had a brother , Bozidar , and a sister , Anna . Her father Klaus Radner and his wife had immigrated from Austria and started a trading company . They were not particularly interested in music . During long drives to Austria , Maria would sing for hours . At school she was a " rather unobtrusive , popular student " who enjoyed music lessons but found mathematics difficult . Her talent for singing remained unnoticed at school , but when she was 14 , her parents introduced her to voice teacher Angelo Melzani , who told her , " I will get you into opera . " As a teen she took part in the Rhenish Carnival and the Largest Fair on the Rhine (Große Rheinkirmes) . Her father remembered her calling him excitedly after winning first prize in a beer @-@ tent karaoke competition . She attended the St. Ursula Gymnasium in Düsseldorf , finishing in 2000 .

= = Vocal education (2000 – 2008) = =

Radner pursued German studies for one semester , but left because she disliked it . She started training in an import – export business and had the best grades at the vocational school , but felt that it did not suit her . She applied to the Robert Schumann Hochschule for music in Düsseldorf and was one of seven selected from 200 applicants . Her voice teacher , Michaela Krämer , considered her to be a mezzo @-@ soprano . Radner 's father obtained additional voice lessons for her with Jeannette Zarou in Düsseldorf , and later with mezzo @-@ soprano Marga Schiml , both of whom are experts in early music and Lieder . They recognized that she was really a contralto . Radner 's mother died in 2003 after a long illness . Almost a year later , Radner earned her diploma . In the 2006 Berlin National Singing Competition , she won the – 3 @, @ 000 third prize in the concert (not opera) division and a scholarship from the Richard Wagner Society in Bayreuth to attend the 2007 Bayreuth Festival . In the concert division of the 2007 Cantilena Singing Competition , she placed second out of 120 vocalists from 19 countries . In 2008 she played Cornelia in Handel 's Giulio Cesare in Egitto at the Theater Hagen . It was to be her only engagement as an ensemble member at a theatre . She decided that it was " not her world " , not because it was no fun , but because she wanted to earn more , and she went independent . Radner was still a student in 2008 when she made her first public appearance under Zubin Mehta at the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia , singing Martin y Soler 's oratorio Philitaei a Jonatha disperse . She gave a recital in June 2008 .

In August 2008 Radner performed the title role in Handel 's Solomon at the Bregenzer Festspiele . Local newspapers praised her as " outshining " the other , more established British soloists (Vorarlberger Nachrichten , 19 August 2008) and as possessing the " rare pitch of a true alto , having an impressive charisma and great musicality " (Vorarlberger Neue Tageszeitung , 20 August 2008) . In 2009 she performed in a new production of Parsifal under Lorin Maazel in Valencia and in Arthur Honegger 's Jeanne d 'Arc au bûcher under the direction of Antonio Pappano at Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome .

= = Career (2009 ? 2015) = =

After graduating with distinction , Radner performed Schumann 's Faust scenes under Jesús López @-@ Cobos at the Teatro Real Madrid . She sang in Beethoven 's Symphony No. 9 conducted by Gianandrea Noseda at the Teatro Regio Torino . She performed a recital at Wahnfried on 16 August 2009 with works by Schubert , Brahms , Liszt and Wagner 's Wesendonck Lieder . In December 2009 she sang the third lady in Mozart 's Die Zauberflöte under Tomá? Netopil at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich in five performances . The conductor Sir Simon Rattle cast her as First Norn and Flosshilde in Götterdämmerung at the 2009 Festival d ? Aix @-@ en @-@ Provence and again at the Salzburger Osterfestspiele in 2010 .

In 2009 and 2010 , Radner was part of a new production of Stravinsky 's Rossignol by the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto . She then sang Beethoven 's Missa Solemnis under Philippe Herreweghe at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam .

In 2010 , she gave her first performance as Erda in a concert adaptation of Das Rheingold at the Leipzig Opera , a role she performed every year from then until her death . In the same year she sang in Mahler 's Symphony No. 2 (the Resurrection) under Pappano in Rome and Milan . In the summer of 2010 she was part of a new production of Elektra at her first summer Salzburg Festival under Daniele Gatti and Die Frau ohne Schatten , conducted by Christian Thielemann . In October 2010 she appeared as Dryad in Ariadne auf Naxos at the Theater an der Wien , conducted by Bertrand de Billy .

Radner performed the third lady in Die Zauberflöte at La Scala under Roland Böer during March and April 2011 , and Rheingold 's Erda in Essen conducted by Stefan Soltesz in April . At the Salzburg Festival in July and August she was " a voice from above " and a servant in Richard Strauss 's Die Frau ohne Schatten under Christian Thielemann . She performed Martha in Tchaikovsky 's Iolanta and " death " in Le Rossignol , both under Ivor Bolton . In November 2011 she sang Siegfried 's Erda in Leipzig under Ulf Schirmer .

In January 2012 Radner made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City in Götterdämmerung . The production was documented in the film Wagner 's Dream by Robert Lepage and the 11 February 2012 performance was recorded and broadcast by radio . In March 2012 , she participated in Die Frau ohne Schatten at La Scala under Marc Albrecht . In the fall of 2012 , she was at the Royal Opera House in London performing in three Wagner operas conducted by Pappano : the Erda in Siegfried and Rheingold during September and October , and the first norn in Götterdämmerung during October and November 2012 . She sang in Dvorak 's Requiem under Tomas Netopil in Lyon , and in Mahler 's Symphony No. 3 under Sebastian Weigle in Frankfurt am Main .

In January 2013 Radner appeared as the valkyrie Schwertleite in Die Walküre at the Teatro Comunale di Firenze under Zubin Mehta , and in March she again portrayed Erda in Das Rheingold , conducted by Ingo Metzmacher at the Grand Théâtre de Genève . She traveled to Bucharest in September , where she sang Erda in a concert performance of Das Rheingold with the Radio Symphony Orchestra Berlin under the direction of Marek Janowski . The 2013 ? 2014 season also included Dvorak 's Stabat Mater with Santa Cecilia in Rome under Netopil .

From January to May 2014 , in Geneva , Radner performed Erda in Siegfried , and in May in Das Rheingold conducted by Metzmacher . In April 2014 she performed as Anna in the Berlioz opera Les Troyens at La Scala under Pappano .

Radner gave her final performance as the earth goddess Erda on 23 March 2015 in Wagner 's Siegfried at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona . She had been scheduled to appear at Bayreuth in the summer of 2015 .

= = Personal life = =

Scottish mezzo @-@ soprano Karen Cargill summarized " Maria Radner , my beloved friend " in The Guardian : " She was the most generous @-@ spirited person I have ever met . Hysterical laughter , an obsession with all things Burberry , unadulterated passion for Bayern Munich and the

warmest of hugs were things you could always be guaranteed of when you were with her . Her son and partner were her whole life . " Further down Cargill qualified the latter , in that " Music was Maria 's entire life until she met her partner and they had their son . "

The authors of an article in the German weekly Stern echoed this sentiment when they wrote that " Radner was a happy mother . Radner had a side , that many internationally successful opera stars are not privy to : her own family . " Stern described photos of her private life , published one week prior in Bild , showing the young woman embraced by her partner Sascha Schenk in the soccer stadium with a scarf of FC Bayern Munich , and him holding their infant son , who is sitting on a motorbike . Stern wrote that " privately Radner was able to simply be Maria , the wife of insurance specialist Sascha S. "

According to Opernnetz " Radner had moved with him [Schenk] to Wuppertal @-@ Kronenberg . " Bild wrote " They lived in Mettmann . She was travelling a lot professionally , while he looked after his insurance clients in Wuppertal . " Their son Felix Schenk was described as one year old by Bild , and as two years according to the Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung .

= = Death = =

Radner died on 24 March 2015 along with her husband Sascha Schenk , their two @-@ year @-@ old son Felix , and her colleague Oleg Bryjak , when Germanwings Flight 9525 crashed near Prads @-@ Haute @-@ Bléone , Alpes @-@ de @-@ Haute @-@ Provence , France . The pilot had a history of depression , had barricaded himself into the cockpit and steered the plane into the mountains . They were en route to Düsseldorf after Radner 's and Bryjak 's two performances in Wagner 's Siegfried at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona . Radner 's voice teacher Michaela Krämer said " she was a magnificent artist and yet remained unassuming , helpful and natural " .

The Metropolitan Opera issued a brief statement , mourning her " untimely and tragic death " and calling her " a gifted artist who touched the lives of many " . The Deutsche Oper am Rhein expressed sympathy .

= = Discography = =

Rundfunk @-@ Sinfonieorchester Berlin Choir / Wagner ? Richard Wagner : Das Rheingold . 28 May 2013 . PentaTone Classics .

Gürzenich @-@ Orchester Köln / Markus Stenz , conductor : Gustav Mahler : Symphony No. 8 . Oehms Classics ; recording of a September 2011 live performance in the Philharmonie Köln . Maria Radner as Maria Egyptiaca (Part 2 , Acta Sanctorum) .