

Thomas Cooley, tenor

Thomas Cooley has been praised for his clear, supple, lyrical, powerful and expressive voice. This, combined with his musicianship and sense of style makes him equally at home on the opera, concert and recital stages. As an operatic performer, his repertoire ranges from Monteverdi and Händel, through Mozart and Rossini, to the present day. In May of 1998 he made his Bavarian State Opera debut in the world premiere of Manfred Trojahn's *Was ihr wollt*. Other roles include Count Almaviva in Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Oronte in Handel's *Alcina*, Ugone in Händel's *Flavio*, Nerone in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Jaquino in Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Leandro in Busoni's *Arlecchino*. Mr. Cooley has been engaged since 2002 at the Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz in Munich, where he has been singing such roles as Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and the title role in *Idomeneo* as well as the role of Felix Nightingale in the Baroque Pasticcio *Ein Theater nach der Mode*, and where he recently sang Count Almaviva in the premiere of Claus Guth's new production of Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* to great critical acclaim.

As a concert performer, Thomas Cooley appears on an international level, appearing in many of the great concert halls of Europe and the U.S. He appears regularly with major orchestras and ensembles such as the Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, the Bavarian Radio Orchestra, the Bach Collegium Stuttgart, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the Minnesota Orchestra, as well as with leading Baroque orchestras, such as the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Tafelmusik, and the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin. His concert repertoire encompasses a wide range of works, but centers around the great works of Monteverdi, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Britten, whereby the Evangelist in Bach's Passions and the great oratorios of Handel, such as *Jephtha*, *Samson* and *Judas Maccabeus* figure most prominently. He performs internationally with conductors such as Helmuth Rilling, Peter Schreier, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Nicholas McGegan, Bruno Weil, Joshua Rifkin, Markus Stenz, Enoch zu Guttenberg, and Manfred Honeck. Recent important engagements include the Swiss premiere of Wolfgang Rihm's new Lukas Passion setting, *Deus Passus* with Helmuth Rilling, as well as Ramirez's *Misa criolla* with the Munich MottetenChor in Avery Fisher Hall in New York.

Important engagements of the past season include Mozart's *C-minor Mass* and J.S. Bach's *Magnificat* with Helmuth Rilling and the Minnesota Orchestra, Edward Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* with the Berliner Singakademie, Handel's *Samson* in Nuremberg, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the Gürzenich Orchestra in Cologne, Handel's only cantata for tenor: *Look Down, Harmonious Saint* with Nicholas McGegan at the Handel Festival in Göttingen and Britten's *War Requiem* with the Munich Bach Choir under Ralf Otto. Of his debut in the Cologne Philharmonie as the Evangelist in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, one reviewer wrote, "Especially Thomas Cooley stood out among the strong soloists. A better Evangelist, with such intensity and sensibility, can hardly be imagined." He has been a soloist on numerous radio and CD recordings. Recent CD recordings include Handel's *Athalia* with Peter Neumann and the Kölner Kammerchor (MDG), Felix Mendelssohn's *Die Erste Walpurgisnacht* with the Münchener

Motettenchor (Weltbild) and the world premiere recording of Vivaldi's newly re-discovered *Dixit Dominus* for Deutsche Grammophone.

This season's concerts include Britten's *War Requiem* with the Munich MotettenChor, Mozart's *Requiem* with the Windsbacher Knabenchor in Barcelona, Mozart's *Messias* and *C minor Mass* at the Göttingen Händelfestspiele, Mozart's *Schuldigkeit des Ersten Gebots* with the North German Radio Orchestra, Hannover, Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* at the Dresden Music Festival and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in the Kreuzkirche in Dresden. Important upcoming engagements include the *Christmas Oratorio* with Nicolas McGegan and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra in San Francisco, the arias of the *St. John Passion* with Robert Spano and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, a European tour of Bach's *Magnificat* and Saint-Saëns *Oratorio de Noël* with the Windsbacher Knabenchor und Kodaly's *Psalmus Hungaricus* with the Calgary Philharmonic.

The art of the song recital is particularly important to the young tenor. A recording of German Christmas songs with the guitarist Carsten Linck was released on CD in 2000. He performed a recital of Britten's *Winter Words* and *Still Falls the Rain* at the Britten Festival in Aldeburgh with pianist Andrew West, with whom he will also perform Vaughn Williams' *On Wenlock Edge* at the International Chamber Music Festival in Nuremberg. With Nicolas McGegan, he will perform Irish and Scottish folksongs of Haydn and Beethoven at the Göttingen Handel Festival this June. He also performs regularly with the pianist Donald Sulzen, with whom he has recorded Britten's *Holy Sonnets of John Donne* for the Bavarian Radio.