

# RENÉE FLEMING

INITIATIVE

LYRIC OPERA OF CHICAGO

## RENÉE FLEMING BIOGRAPHY

One of the most beloved and celebrated musical ambassadors of our time, soprano Renée Fleming captivates audiences with her sumptuous voice, consummate artistry, and compelling stage presence. Known as “the people’s diva” and named the number one singer by Salzburger Festspiele Magazin in 2010, she continues to grace the world’s greatest opera stages and concert halls, now extending her reach to include other musical forms and media. Over the past few seasons, Ms. Fleming has been hosting a wide variety of television and radio broadcasts, including the Metropolitan Opera’s *Live in HD* series for movie theaters and television, and *Live From Lincoln Center* on PBS.

As a musical statesman, Renée Fleming has been sought after on numerous distinguished occasions, from the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize ceremony to performances in Beijing during the 2008 Olympic Games. On January 18, 2009, she was featured on the televised *We Are One: The Obama Inaugural Celebration at the Lincoln Memorial* concert for President Obama. She has performed for the United States Supreme Court, HRH The Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace, and, in November 2009, celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Czech Republic’s “Velvet Revolution” at the invitation of Václav Havel. An additional distinction was bestowed in 2008, when breaking a precedent, Ms. Fleming became the first woman in the 125-year history of the Metropolitan Opera to solo headline an opening night gala.

Renée Fleming’s 2010-11 season at the Metropolitan Opera includes performances of Rossini’s *Armida* (February/March 2011) and Strauss’s *Capriccio* (March/April 2011). Her 2010-11 concert season began with the BBC Symphony Orchestra’s Last Night of the Proms performance in September, followed by appearances with the Pittsburgh Symphony conducted by Manfred Honeck, the National Symphony under Christoph Eschenbach, and the Saint Louis Symphony with David Robertson, all for their 2010-11 gala concerts. In October, Ms. Fleming traveled to Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium with the Munich Philharmonic and conductor Christian Thielemann, and in November, she embarked on a Scandinavian tour, performing with the Danish National Symphony, Aarhus Symphony, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Norwegian Radio and Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestras. Further concert highlights include performances with the Lyric Opera of Chicago Orchestra and the Toronto Symphony, as well as the Staatskapelle Dresden and the Berliner Philharmoniker. A dedicated and masterful recitalist, Ms.

Fleming appeared in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and Kansas City, Missouri (October 2010), and in January 2011, she embarks on a recital tour to Quebec, Washington, D.C., New York's Carnegie Hall, Ann Arbor, Montreal, and San Juan.

A three-time Grammy winner, Ms. Fleming won the 2010 Grammy Award for Best Classical Vocal Performance for *Verismo* (Decca/September 2009), a CD featuring a collection of rarely heard Italian arias. In June 2010, Decca and Mercury Records released the CD *Dark Hope*, which features Ms. Fleming performing songs by artists such as Leonard Cohen, Peter Gabriel, Arcade Fire and Death Cab for Cutie, among others. Ms. Fleming's most recent DVD, *Renée Fleming & Dmitri Hvorostovsky: A Musical Odyssey in St. Petersburg*, follows Ms. Fleming and baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky to Russia, where they explore and perform in some of St. Petersburg's most spectacular locations. These releases follow the critically acclaimed 2008 CD of *Strauss: Four Last Songs* and a DVD of the complete *Thaïs* by Massenet. In recent years, this twelve-time Grammy-nominated artist has recorded everything from Strauss's complete *Daphne* to the jazz album *Haunted Heart*, to the movie soundtrack of *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*. Her recording honors range from the 2009 Echo Award for Strauss's *Four Last Songs* to the Prix Maria Callas Orphée d'Or by the Académie du Disque Lyrique for TDK's DVD production of *Capriccio*.

Renée Fleming's artistry has been an inspiration to many other prominent artists, such as Chuck Close and Robert Wilson, whose portraits of her were included in the Metropolitan Opera's 2007 fund-raising auction. Two portraits of Ms. Fleming were also created by Francesco Clemente, who revealed one work in Salzburg in spring 2007, with the Metropolitan Opera displaying the other in 2008. Among her numerous awards are Sweden's Polar Prize (2008); the *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur* from the French government (2005); Honorary Membership in the Royal Academy of Music (2003); and a 2003 Honorary Doctorate from The Juilliard School, where she was also commencement speaker.

An advocate for literacy, Renée Fleming has been featured in promotional campaigns for the Association of American Publishers ("Get Caught Reading"), and the Magazine Publishers of America's READ poster campaign for the American Library Association. She was honored by The New York Public Library as a "Library Lion." Her book, *The Inner Voice*, was published by Viking Penguin in 2004, and released in paperback by Penguin the following year. An intimate account of her career and creative process, the book is also published in France by Fayard Editions, in the United Kingdom by Virgin Books, by Henschel Verlag in Germany, Shunjusha in Japan, and by Fantom Press in Russia.

In addition to her work onstage and in recordings, Renée Fleming has represented Rolex timepieces in print advertising since 2001. In 2008, she launched *La Voce by Renée Fleming*, a fragrance designed for her, with the proceeds benefiting the Metropolitan Opera. Master Chef

Daniel Boulud created the dessert “La Diva Renée” (1999) in her honor, and she inspired the “Renée Fleming Iris” (2004), which has been replicated in porcelain by Boehm. Having been added to Mr. Blackwell’s best-dressed list, Ms. Fleming has worn concert gowns designed by Bill Blass, Gianfranco Ferré, John Galiano, Christian Lacroix, Karl Lagerfeld, Issey Miyake, Oscar de la Renta, Angel Sanchez and Vivienne Westwood. In addition to serving as the face of opera for two public-transit campaigns in New York and London, Ms. Fleming has appeared on *The Martha Stewart Show*, *Spectacle: Elvis Costello with...*, *The View*, and *Prairie Home Companion* as “Renata Flambé,” among numerous other media outlets.

Ms. Fleming is currently a member of the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Hall Corporation, the Board of Sing for Hope, and the Advisory Board of the White Nights Foundation of America.

Additional information about Ms. Fleming can be found at her website: [www.reneefleming.com](http://www.reneefleming.com)