

Jakob Pilgram, tenor

Jakob Pilgram studied singing (under Hans-Jürg Rickenbacher), Music Education and Choral Direction at the Music Academy of the City of Basel. He graduated in Music Education in July 2008 with distinction, then continuing his singing studies under Werner Gura at the Zurich University of Fine Arts, graduating, again with distinction, in January 2011. He also took part courses and masterclass with, amongst others, Gérard Wyss, Jan Schultsz, Jürg Henneberger, Daniel Fueter, Hans Adolfsen and Markus Weiss, thereby strengthening and deepening his affinity for and understanding of chamber music and song. He also furthered his singing studies with Margreet Honig in Amsterdam.

In 2005 and again in 2008 he was a soloist in three Bach cantatas and in Handel's Ode for St. Cecilia's Day in concerts conducted by Ton Koopman at Carnegie Hall in New York; Pilgram counts these amongst his most important and formative musical experiences. During the 2005-6 season he sang in Purcell's Dido and Aeneas at the Theater Basel, directed by Sebastian Nübling. He also toured with this production to Berlin in 2007, where it was a guest at the that city's prestigious Theatre Symposium (Theatertreffen). Also in 2007 he sang the role of Damon in over twenty performances of Handel's Acis and Galatea with the Freitags-Akademie Bern, in a production directed by the puppeteer Neville Tranter. He toured again with the same ensemble in 2010, this time in Purcell's Dido and Aeneas. Since 2005 he has been a member of the ensemble of the Origen Cultural Festival in the Grisons area of Switzerland, where he has sung in world premiere performances of such operas as Apocalypse (2005), Benjamin by Gion Antoni Derungs (2006), David (2007), Samson by Lorenz Dangel (2009), Messiah by Oliver Weber (2008), Mikael by Pawel Lukaszewski (2011) as well as in Benjamin Britten's The Burning Fiery Furnace in 2012. In 2011 he also sang the role of Flaminio in Scarlatti's opera Il trionfo dell'onore at the Lucerne Theatre. Jakob Pilgram is also active both in Switzerland and abroad as a soloist in concerts and oratorios and as a specialist for Lieder. In this field he has been strongly influenced by working with such conductors as Thomas Hengelbrock, Ton Koopman, Andrea Marcon, Alessandro De Marchi, Rudolf Lutz and Clau Scherrer. His repertoire embraces works ranging from Claudio Monteverdi to Hans Werner Henze.

In 2005 Jakob Pilgram founded the professional vocal ensemble larynx (of which he is both artistic director and conductor. Larynx was awarded the Canton of Basel-Land's Prize for the Promotion of Culture in 2012. He is also a member of various professional vocal ensembles such as the Amsterdam Baroque Choir, the Balthasar Neumann Choir and the Ensemble Vocal Origen.

Since 2004 he has been singing Lieder in partnership with the pianist Mischa Sutter. They won third prize in the 2012 international song competition "Schubert and the Music of Modernity" in Graz in 2012, and were awarded a special prize for the performance of Lieder by the Basel Orchestral Society in 2008. Their repertoire encompasses the great song cycles of the romantic era by Schubert and Schumann as well as the oeuvre of Hugo Wolf and various French song cycles by Gabriel Fauré, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel.

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