

MORGAN MIDDLETON

mezzo soprano

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BIOGRAPHY (Full - 634 words)

Virginia native Morgan Middleton is an emerging classical vocalist and recent Young Artist with Chicago Opera Theater. At COT, the mezzo-soprano has covered roles in performances of *Everest* and *Aleko*, and she created the role of Frances in the world premiere of *Freedom Ride* (Shore) and the role of Jane Doe in a virtual performance of *The Transformation of Jane Doe* (Garrop/Dye) as part of COT's Vanguard Initiative. In COT's revamped virtual 2020-21 season, Ms. Middleton premiered the roles of Louise / Dot in *The Puppy Episode* (Recio/Vavrek), and performed the role of Young Mother in *Taking Up Serpents* and Flower #3 in *La hija de Rappaccini*.

Ms. Middleton received a 2018 Encouragement Award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Capital District. She was a 2017 Apprentice Artist with the Santa Fe Opera, where she covered the role of the teacher in the world premiere of *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* and sang in the chorus on the Grammy Award winning recording of the opera.

As an apprentice artist with the Miami Music Festival, Ms. Middleton performed the role of Tituba in *The Crucible*. The South Florida Classical Review said of her performance, "Morgan Middleton was a scene stealer as the slave Tituba. Her rich, deep mezzo and fine projection propelled Tituba's narrative of her conversations with the devil. Her folk-like prison lament was poignant and powerful."

A two-time winner of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Spouses' Heineken Performing Arts Scholarship, Ms. Middleton appeared as a featured soloist for the 2014 CBC Celebration of Leadership in the Fine Arts held in Washington, DC. Also in 2014, Ms. Middleton was the alto soloist in Vienna Presbyterian Church's production of *Messiah*. Morgan has performed in recital in northern Virginia including as part of the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association's Summer Chamber Music Series.

Ms. Middleton's musical and artistic skills have taken her well beyond the operatic stage. She has devoted much of her time since 2009 giving back to the communities in which she has lived. Her affinity for seniors lead her to develop a series of concerts for retirement communities and nursing facilities throughout northern Virginia and southern California. She also lent her voice to community events such as a Wounded Warrior Transition Unit Town Hall, the Mount Vernon Slave Quarters Rededication Ceremony and Annual Slave Memorial Commemoration Ceremonies at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate.

Ms. Middleton is equally active as an arts producer. Through a highly competitive process, she was awarded grants by New England Conservatory of Music's Entrepreneurial Musicianship Department and by The Boston Foundation to produce and perform a one-woman show at the historic Coolidge Corner Theatre. The show, *Remember When*, served as a musical benefit event to raise funds for Alzheimer's research, increase awareness of Alzheimer's and empower people to employ music in the treatment of the disease. Ms. Middleton designed *Remember When* to employ music from time

periods that research has shown to stimulate mental activity and positive mood changes even for those in the late stages of the disease.

Ms. Middleton completed her Bachelor of Music degree in vocal arts performance at the University of Southern California, where she appeared in Chamber Opera of USC productions as Mrs. Nolan in *The Medium*, Armelinde in Viardot's *Cendrillon* and Celeste #2 in *Saturday in the Park with George*. While at USC, Ms. Middleton performed as a member of the opera chorus for *The Tempest*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Iphigénie en Tauride* and *Il viaggio a Reims*. Morgan earned her Master of Music degree at the New England Conservatory. Her operatic credits at the conservatory include Narciso in Handel's *Agrippina*, Dorothée in Massenet's *Cendrillon*, Véronique in *Dr. Miracle* and Carmela in *La vida breve*. She completed her Professional Diploma in Opera at Roosevelt University in May 2021.