



RAINA KABAIIVANSKA

THE MASTER CLASSES AND THE RAINA KABAIIVANSKA SCHOOL

Raina Kabaivanska Fund

*"To help artistically talented
young opera singers - that is
my obligation and the aim of this Fund"*

Raina Kabaivanska



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The Saint Sofia Basilica dating back to the 6th century, the fifth church erected in this place.



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RAINA KABAIVANSKA

Under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria



New Bulgarian University is a modern university of great national significance actively participating in international university networks.

Founded in 1991 in response to the need for a new liberal education model, the university has initiated substantial reforms in Bulgarian higher education by introducing Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, admission based on General Education Test, interdisciplinary and individual Bachelor's programmes, minor programmes, the credit system, distance and web-based learning, innovative university environment and lifelong learning opportunities.

The academic profile of New Bulgarian University highlights social sciences and humanities, natural sciences, new technologies and arts. The university offers alternative programmes and practice-oriented education encouraging students' free choice and attracting outstanding individuals as its faculty.

The university offers its students an environment of civil commitment and public awareness. Thus it produces students with high academic competence and practical skills, enterprising and socially responsible. With its international programmes, NBU creates favourable conditions for student mobility.

As part of the international university network, New Bulgarian University is always open for dialogue between academic traditions and modernity. Such dialogue is aimed at students and society, creating new contributions and practices. The motto of New Bulgarian University is *Ne varietatem timeamus* "Let's not be afraid of diversity".

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Raina Kabaivanska

Raina Kabaivanska is one of the most distinguished opera artists of our time. Her 1961 debut in Milan's La Scala paved the way for a brilliant career which has taken her to the stages of all major opera theatres and concert halls worldwide: Covent Garden in London, the Paris Opera, the Teatro Real in Madrid, the Metropolitan Opera and Carnegie Hall in New York, the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, the Staatsoper in Hamburg, the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, the Sofia Opera, the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, the Tokyo Opera, the Salzburg Festival and many others. Ms. Kabaivanska has been particularly active in Italy where she has performed in all major, as well as less prominent opera theatres: —La Scala, the Teatro Verdi in Trieste, the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, Arena di Verona, the theatres in Turin, Genoa, Parma, Bologna, Modena, and the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma. She has performed on stage with a number of generations of great tenors:—Franco Corelli, Mario del Monaco, Jon Wickers, Carlo Bergonzi, Alfredo Kraus, Plácido Domingo, José Carreras, Luciano Pavarotti.





“Raina Kabaivanska’s career is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable of the 20th century. Endowed with a timbre of a rare quality coupled with her impeccable technique, Raina Kabaivanska has performed all great parts of the opera repertoire, with a special attention to the style of each composer.”

Sergio Segalini

Throughout her 55-year career, she has performed unforgettable roles in a remarkably vast repertoire: from the 18th century—Gluck (*Armida*), Spontini (*La vestale*), Rossini (*Guglielmo Tell*); from the 19th century—Donizetti (*Roberto Devereux*, *Fausta*), Bellini (*Beatrice di Tenda*, *Il pirata*), Berlioz (*Benvenuto Cellini*), Verdi (*Don Carlo*, *Otello*, *Falstaff*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *La forza del destino*, *I vespri siciliani*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Ernani*, *La messa da Requiem*), Wagner (*Rienzi*), Gounod (*Faust*), Chaykovski (*La dama di picche*, *Evgheni Oneghin*), Boito (*Mefistofele*), Massenet (*Manon*, *Thaïs*), Catalani (*La Valli*), Janacek (*Il caso Makropoulos*, *Jenufa*), Leoncavallo (*I pagliacci*), Puccini (*Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Manon Lescaut*, *La Bohème*, *Suor Angelica*, *Il Tabarro*, *Turandot*), Richard Strauss (*Capriccio*), Busoni (*Turandot*), Cilea (*Adriana Lecouvreur*), Giordano (*Andrea Chenier*), and from the 20th century—Malipiero (*Torneo notturno*), Zandonai (*Francesca da Rimini*), Poulenc (*La voix humaine*, *Dialogues des carmelites*), Weill (*Lady in The Dark*), Dallapiccola (*Il prigioniero*), Britten (*The Turn of the Screw*), Nino Rota (*La scuola di guida*), as well as chamber music by Massenet, Chausson, Ravel, Poulenc and Shostakovich.





Her interpretations of the great dramatic roles of Adriana Lecouvreur, Francesca da Rimini and Manon Lescaut, as well as Tosca and Madama Butterfly remain emblematic and unequalled.

Kabaivanska's outstanding performances in the cinema are also well-known: Pagliacci (1968), Il Trovatore (1978), Falstaff (1982), Madama Butterfly (1983), Tosca (1990), Un bel di vedremo (1997) and Gabrielle (2005).

She is the recipient of numerous awards: Bellini – 1965, Viotti d`Oro – 1970, Puccini – 1978, Illica – 1979, Monteverdi – 1980, the Medici Academy award, Lorenzo il Magnifico – 1990, the Grand Prix "A life devoted to music" – Venice 2000 and Doctor Honoris Causa of New Bulgarian University for her contribution to world music culture.

She was awarded the Order of Stara Planina for her exceptional contribution in the field of the arts and the development of democracy in Bulgaria. She was also made Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic for civil valour and an outstanding contribution to the arts. In 2011, she was awarded the highest grade of Commandeur of the Order of Arts and Letters of the French Republic. In 2013, Raina Kabaivanska was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Oscar for opera.



Raina Kabaivanska is a professor at the *Accademia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena, at the Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena, Italy, as well as New Bulgarian University. "One of my teachers was a very generous woman - Zita Fumagalli, and I wish to do for young people what she did for me - I want to give back a part of that kindness", Ms. Kabaivanska has said. In 2002, she set up a scholarship at New Bulgarian University to support the best performers in her Master Classes. The Raina Kabaivanska Fund was established through private contributions of the great artist and philanthropist as an extension to her charitable initiatives in Bulgaria.

The purpose of the Fund is to enable young opera singers to continue their education with Raina Kabaivanska in Bulgaria and Italy. Up to the present moment, more than 70 young performers have been awarded scholarships from the Raina Kabaivanska Fund. Over the years private donors and organizations have contributed to the fund. In the course of the last fifteen years, the Kabaivanska School has developed and refined the talents of successful singers from a wide range of nationalities. With the support of the fund their performances at the most prestigious opera theatres and festivals are now met with universal acclaim.

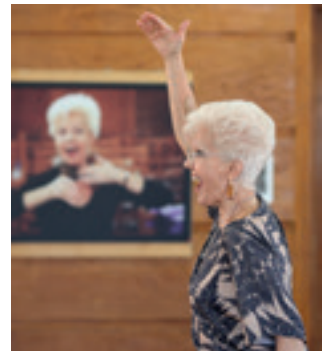
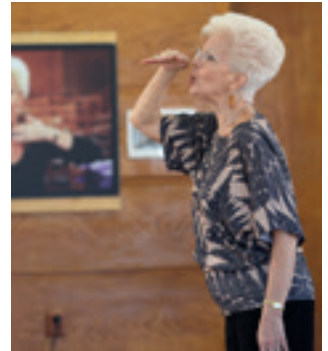
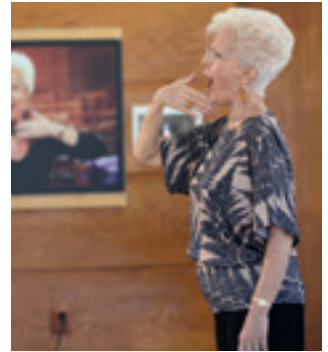


The Master Classes and the Raina Kabaivanska School




One of the main contributions of university education is that it helps establish and develop schools of thought named after prominent figures in the fields of science and art. Musical and academic communities now speak of the Kabaivanska School. For more than 15 years she has been teaching the younger generation of opera singers about the extensive heritage of the classical opera theatre. The main institutions now privileged to develop the Kabaivanska School are the Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena, Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena and New Bulgarian University.

Over the years, Raina Kabaivanska's singing and interpretation Master Classes in Italy, followed by those in Spain, France, Sweden, Bulgaria, Russia and Japan, have created a network of music academies, theatres and universities, which follow the classical vocal traditions of Italian bel canto. After auditioning more than 50 applicants from Europe, America, Asia, South Africa and Australia for each Master Class, Raina Kabaivanska selects 12 gifted young performers. "I have to be alert," Kabaivanska recently noted in an interview explaining how she picks her students. "I need total concentration since it's crucial for me to be able to identify the slightest sparkle, where an artist might be seen. *"Everybody can sing, everybody can boast a good voice; however, you need insight to see beyond that and discern the intelligence beneath the emotion. Back in my time, in the 1960s, one could build a career solely relying on a big pleasant voice; nowadays however, we're at a totally different stage—of the philological reading of music. Music which is meticulously read from the point of view of the musicologist, rather than the performer."*





Kabaivanska's Master Classes are an interactive way of training, enabling young singers to develop a sense of great art from one of the legends of contemporary opera theatre, and further improve their singing technique and work on the interpretation of new roles. Intercultural exchange and serious competition which are at the basis of the Kabaivanska School allow students not only to put themselves in the lecturers' shoes but to get a taste of what it's like to be a creator.



“Love what you do.
Then work
becomes pure joy.”

Raina Kabaivanska is a personality endowed not only with the gift of a great artist, but as a teacher in the broadest sense of the word. This is mainly due to her tremendous talent and her extraordinary generosity. The way she views teaching, in her own words, is "a duty to continue the traditions in a great art". Her ambition to share her experience without viewing her students as a continuation of herself has always been impressive. What is of primary importance to her is to bring out their individuality. Moreover, she is exceptionally meticulous in her approach to the composer. "There are two trends," Kabaivanska says, "either to adhere to historical traditions, established by the capabilities of the performers and the personal perception of the conductor, or to read the composer's manuscript. I would go with both trends since one of the reasons why audiences come to the theatre is also to experience the personal interpretation of the artist. And I must admit that all my fans that I meet after so many years, often say to me 'Thank you for the emotions you gave me'. Therefore, I do not view my students as a continuation of myself – I am truly happy that I still have an ear for each particular case."



Something else that distinguishes Kabaivanska's classes is the link established between the continuous process of training and the big stage. Raina Kabaivanska not only discovers talents, cultivates and develops them, but she supports them by bringing them to the international opera stage. Since 2001, New Bulgarian University has been one of a network of institutions involved in the development of Kabaivanska School by organizing Master Classes, in which the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra and the Sofia Opera have acted as partners. Upon completion of each cycle of master classes, her most distinguished students perform at a Gala concert with the special participation of Raina Kabaivanska herself. The directors of opera theatres, organizers of competitions and festivals, representatives of artist management agencies, as well as national and international media are among the audience at those concerts. During the concerts, Raina Kabaivanska awards scholarships for training in Bulgaria and Italy.





“Everybody can sing, everybody can boast a good voice; however, you need insight to see beyond that and discern the intelligence beneath the emotion.”

Raina Kabaivanska





In 2010, a project entitled "Raina Kabaivanska to present her students on the international opera stage" was launched in Sofia by Raina Kabaivanska under the auspices of New Bulgarian University. The project began with the production of "La Bohème" with Raina Kabaivanska's students from Bulgaria and Italy in the leading roles.

After six superb performances of "La Bohème" on the stage of the Sofia Opera in 2010 and 2011, Raina Kabaivanska's scholars participated in two performances at the Teatro Comunale "Luciano Pavarotti" in Modena, Italy, in January 2012. In December 2012, a second operatic performance was staged — "Werther" by Jules Massenet in collaboration with New Bulgarian University, the Sofia Opera and the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, Belgium.



Artists from Kabaivanska School

Among the scholarship holders of Kabaivanska Fund with world-wide career are: Veronica Simeoni, Maria Agresta, Andrea Carè, Virginia Tola, Victoria Yeo, Sofia Soloviy, Elisa Cho, Shin Je Bang, Simon Lim, as well as younger singers like Maria Radoeva, Kostadin Mechkov, Anton Markov, Matteo Desole, Elisa Barbero, Ana Petricevic, Anaïs Mejías and Selene Zanetti.



Ana Petricevic, soprano (Serbia)

Ana Petricevic holds a degree in opera singing from the Faculty of Music at the University of Arts in Belgrade. She participated in Raina Kabaivanska's Master Classes at New Bulgarian University between 2012 and 2014 and received scholarships from the Raina Kabaivanska Fund for 2012 and 2013. A. Petricevic continues refining her skills in Raina Kabaivanska's Master Class at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena. She is also a laureate of the *Giuseppina Cobelli*, *AsLiCo* and *Ferruccio Tagliavini* competitions.

Her repertoire includes the roles of Micaela from *Carmen* by Bizet, Tatiana from *Eugene Onegin* by Tchaikovsky, the Countess from *Le nozze di Figaro* by Mozart, Giorgetta from *Il Tabarro* by Puccini, as well as *Stabat Mater* by Pergolesi and *Gloria* by Vivaldi.

Anaïs Mejías, soprano (Puerto Rico)

Anaïs studies opera singing under the guidance of Raina Kabaivanska at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena and in the prestigious *Accademia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena. In 2012, she participated in Raina Kabaivanska's Master Class at New Bulgarian University and received a scholarship from the Raina Kabaivanska Fund. In 2013, Anaïs Mejías was Third Prize winner at the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She also won an Encouragement Award at the 2013 *Licia Albanese-Puccini* Competition and was a finalist and grant winner at the 2013 Giulio Gari Foundation Competition.

Her repertoire includes the roles of Mimi from *La Bohème* by Puccini, Cupid in *Orphée aux enfers* by Offenbach, Requiem by Verdi, Elvira from *Ernani* by Verdi.



Andrea Carè, tenor (Italy)

Andrea Carè graduated from the Turin Music Conservatory. In 2005, he won the International Competition for Young Opera Singers in Spoleto. This enabled him to participate in the Master Class of Raina Kabaivanska. He is the last student of Luciano Pavarotti, and it was the great soprano who introduced him to Pavarotti in Modena. Andrea Carè continues to refine his skills in Kabaivanska's Master Classes - at *Accademia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena, Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena and New Bulgarian University.

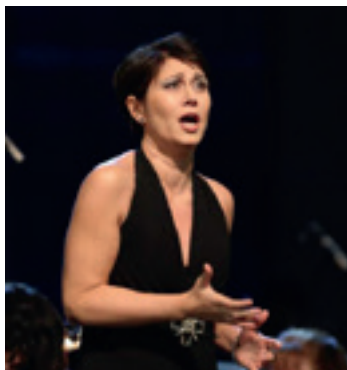
Andrea's repertoire includes leading tenor parts in *Aida*, *Nabucco*, *Don Carlo*, *Macbeth*, and *Un ballo in maschera* by Verdi, *Carmen* by Bizet, *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly* by Puccini, *Samson and Delilah* by Saint-Saëns, *Norma* by Bellini, *Medea* by Cherubini. Andrea Carè is a soloist in some of the most prestigious world theatres - La Scala in Milan, Covent Garden in London, Teatro Linceo in Barcelona, San Carlo in Naples, Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, Deutsche Oper in Berlin, La Fenice in Venice, Staatsoper in Hamburg, Rome Opera and also in the theatres in Geneva, Stockholm, Bari, Bologna, Strasbourg, Trieste, Turin and many others. Carè has performed on stage with some of the greatest artists of our time—Plácido Domingo, Raina Kabaivanska, Anna Caterina Antonacci, Leo Nucci, Elina Garanca and Juan Pons. He has worked with directors Luca Ronconi, Pierluigi Pizzi, Hugo de Ana and with conductors Riccardo Chailly, Bruno Bartoletti and many others.



Anton Markov, baritone (Bulgaria)

Anton holds a degree in opera singing from New Bulgarian University. In 2012, he participated in the Master Class of Raina Kabaivanska and was awarded a two-year scholarship from the Raina Kabaivanska Fund for studies at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena.

In 2014, Anton Markov signed a contract with the artist management agency Music Centre Domani. He made his debut during Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, Italy, in the role of Barone di Trombonok in *Il viaggio a Reims* by Rossini, working with Alberto Zedda and Juan Diego Flórez. In October 2014, he debuted in the role of Figaro from *Le nozze di Figaro* by Mozart in Oradea, Romania, directed by Carmelo D'aniello and under the conductorship of Julian Smith.



Veronica Simeoni, mezzo-soprano (Italy)

Veronica graduated from the Music Conservatory in Adria, Italy. Her singing and artistic refinement under the guidance of Raina Kabaivanska began in 2004 in Verona, and later continued in the *Accademia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena, in Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena, as well as in the Master Classes at New Bulgarian University where she was awarded a scholarship of Raina Kabaivanska Fund. She is the winner of the first prize at *Pavarotti Competition* in Modena, the first prize and the audience award at *Viotti International Music Competition* for opera singers in Vercelli, the second prize at *Verdi Voices Competition* in Busetto. Veronica debuted at La Scala in Milan in *Stabat Mater* by Rossini under the conductorship of Riccardo Chailly and in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* by Offenbah.

Her repertoire includes the roles of Cuniza from *Oberto*, Azucena from *Il Trovatore*, Fenena from *Nabucco*, Amneris from *Aida* and *Requiem* by Verdi, Zayda from *Dom Sébastien* by Donizetti, Didon from *Les Troyens* by Berlioz, Adalgisa from *Norma* by Bellini, Carmen from *Carmen* by Bizet, Leonora from *La Favorite* by Donizetti, *Stabat Mater* by Rossini, Sara from *Roberto Devereux* by Donizetti, Giovanna from *Anna Bolena* by Donizetti, Suzuki from *Madama Butterfly* by Puccini, Charlotte from *Werther* by Massenet etc. Veronica Simeoni participates in performances on opera stages all over the world - La Scala in Milan, Rome Opera, Arena di Verona, opera theatres in Palermo, Venice, Zurich, Bologna, Mexico, Turin and many others. She works and makes recordings with famous conductors like Yuri Temirkanov, Lorin Maazel, Valery Gergiev.

Vittoria Yeo, soprano (South Korea)

Vittoria holds degrees in opera singing from the University in Seoul and the Arrigo Boito Music Conservatory in Parma, Italy. She refined herself as a performer in Raina Kabaivanska's Master Classes at *Accademia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena, Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena and New Bulgarian University. Vittoria Yeo is a scholarship holder of Raina Kabaivanska Fund at New Bulgarian University. She has won many international competitions in Italy including *Magda Olivero International Voice Competition*, *Pietro Mongini International Competition for Young Opera Singers* and *Maria Malibran International Singing Competition*. V. Yeo has also performed at many concerts with Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini of Parma, Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra and the *Orchestra del Teatro Regio di Parma*.

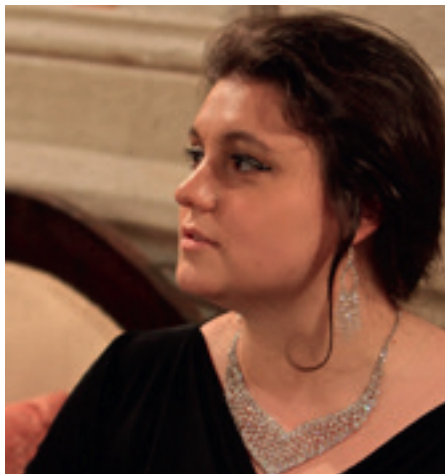
Her repertoire includes roles of Musetta from *La Bohème*, Cio-Cio San from *Madama Butterfly*, Liù from *Turandot* by Puccini, Fiordiligi from *Così fan tutte* and Donna Elvira from *Don Giovanni* by Mozart, Elvira from *Ernani*, Gilda from *Rigoletto*, Leonora from *Il Trovatore*, Lady Macbeth from *Macbeth*, Giovanna from *Giovanna d'Arco* by Verdi etc. Vittoria Yeo works with conductors like Riccardo Mutti, Nicola Paskowski, Myung-whun Chung, participates in opera festivals in Savonlinna and Salzburg and in opera performances at the theatres in Venice, Parma, Ravenna, and Geneva.



Virginia Tola, soprano (Argentina)

Virginia Tola graduated from the Superior Art Institute of Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires and later refined her vocal skills under the guidance of Raina Kabaivanska in Italy. She won the first prize of *Queen Sonja International Music Competition* in Oslo, and a year later - three grand awards of *Operalia 2000 International Singer's Competition* - the Audience Prize, the Zarzuela Prize and the Prize of the art philanthropist Lloyd Rigler. During the same season, Virginia made her debut on the stage of Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires at the world premiere of *Don Juan* by Juan Carlos Zorzi. Since then Tola is a soloist in all major world theatres: Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam, the theatres in Seville and Oviedo, Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia, Opéra de Monte-Carlo, the opera theatres in Parma, Lausanne, Los Angeles, Washington, Bordeaux, Rome, Turin, Bergen, Oslo, Klagenfurt and many others. She participates in concerts with Plácido Domingo all over the world.

Her repertoire includes roles like: Fiordiligi from *Così fan tutte*, Donna Elvira from *Don Giovanni*, the Countess from *Le Nozze di Figaro* by Mozart, Margherita from *Mefistofele* by Arrigo Boito, Mimi from *La Bohème*, Floria Tosca from *Tosca* by Puccini, Micaëla from *Carmen* by Bizet, Marguerite from *Faust* by Charles Gounod, Antonia from *Les contes d'Hoffmann* by Offenbach, Nedda from *Pagliacci* by Leoncavallo, Desdemona from *Othello*, Violetta from *La Traviata*, Alice Ford from *Falstaff*, Abigaille from *Nabucco*, Leonora from *La forza del destino*. Luisa Miller from *Luisa Miller*, Amelia from *Un ballo in maschera*, Lina from *Stiffelio*, Elisabeth of Valois from *Don Carlo*, Lucrezia Contarini from *I due Foscari* by Verdi, Rosina from *Il barbiere di Siviglia* by Rossini.



Elisa Barbero, mezzo-soprano (Italy)

Elisa Barbero graduated from the Turin Conservatory and immediately afterwards was admitted in the Master Classes of Raina Kabaivanska at *Accademia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena, Italy, at New Bulgarian University and also at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena. Elisa is a scholarship holder of Raina Kabaivanska Fund at New Bulgarian University.

She debuted at a young age as Madama Rosa in *Il campanello di notte* by Donizetti. In 2014, she debuted at Opéra Royal de Wallonie in Liège in the role of Maria Stuarda (by Donizetti). She has also performed in *Dido and Aeneas* by Purcell, *Hänsel und Gretel* by Humperdinck, *Pinocchio* by Valtinoni, *Threepenny Opera* by Weill, *Le nozze di Figaro* by Mozart, *I vespri siciliani* by Verdi and *La Cenerentola* by Rossini at Teatro Reggion in Turin, as well as at many other opera theatres in Italy such as Modena, Reggio Emilia, Piacenza, Treviso, Ferrara, Pisa, Livorno, Lucca. Her debut in the role of Adalgisa from *Norma* by Bellini at the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia turned into a permanent engagement for Elisa Barbero.



Elisa Cho, soprano (South Korea)

Elisa Cho started her studies in Seoul. In 2010, she refines her vocal skills and interpretation with Raina Kabaivanska at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena and in her International Master Class at New Bulgarian University. Elisa Cho is a scholarship holder of Raina Kabaivanska Fund at New Bulgarian University.

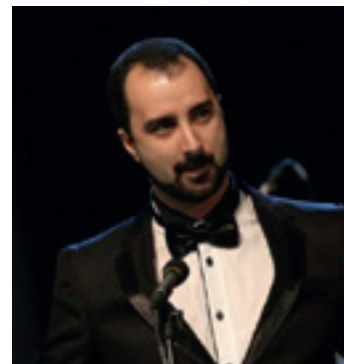
Elisa Cho won numerous international singing competitions, including *Colzani competition* at Teatro Consorziale di Budrio in Bologna. In 2010, she received Best Newcomer award from the Music Association of Korea. In 2011, Elisa Cho was selected for a scholarship for Beirut Festival, and in summer 2012, the Academy of Music Art in Frankfurt awarded her the prestigious Transition Classic Prize for 2012.

Elisa Cho performs main parts in prestigious theatres in Germany, Italy, and South Korea. Her repertoire includes the roles of Mimi from *La Bohème*, Cio-Cio San from *Madama Butterfly*, Anna from *Le Villi* by Puccini, Susanna from *Le nozze di Figaro* by Mozart etc.

Kostadin Mechkov, basso (Bulgaria)

Kostadin Mechkov graduated from Pancho Vladigerov National Academy of Music in Sofia. In the period 2010-2014, he participated in the Master Classes of Raina Kabaivanska at New Bulgarian University. Kostadin has been a scholarship holder from the Raina Kabaivanska Fund at New Bulgarian University over the last two years. He refines his skills under the guidance of Raina Kabaivanska in her Master Classes at *Academia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena and at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena, Italy. Mechkov won the first prize for 2010 of the *22nd Svetoslav Obretenov National Competition for Young Opera Singers and Instrumentalists* and the third prize at *Elena Nicolai International Competition*.

His repertoire includes the roles of Leporello from *Don Giovanni* by Mozart, Alidoro from *La Cenerentola* by Rossini, Figaro from *Le nozze di Figaro* by Mozart, Colline from *La Bohème* by Puccini and Dr. Bartolo from *Il barbiere di Siviglia* by Rossini.



Maria Agresta, soprano (Italy)

Maria Agresta graduated from the Conservatorium in Salerno. Since 2009 she has improved her skills under the guidance of Raina Kabaivanska at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena and in the Master Classes at New Bulgarian University. She is a scholarship holder of Raina Kabaivanska Fund at New Bulgarian University and a winner of numerous international competitions.

In 2010, Maria debuted as Mimi in *La Bohème* at Sofia Opera and *Teatro Comunale Luciano Pavarotti* in Modena within the project "Raina Kabaivanska presents her students at world opera stage" implemented under the auspices of New Bulgarian University. In the period 2011-2013, she had over 20 debuts at the most prestigious opera theatres such as Milan La Scala, Arena di Verona, Bavarian State Opera, Vienna Opera, Covent Garden – London, La Fenice Theatre – Venice, Castello d'Arte di Valencia etc. M. Agresta performs at Carnegie Hall – New York, with National Philharmonic Orchestra of Doha – Qatar and at Hermitage Theatre in St. Petersburg. Her repertoire includes the roles of Norma from *Norma* by Bellini, Michaela from *Carmen* by Bizet, Mimi from *La Bohème*, Liu from *Turandot* by Puccini, Violetta from *La Traviata*, Giovanna from *Giovanna d'Arco*, Leonora from *Oberto*, Desdemona from *Othello*, Lucrezia Contarini from *I due Foscari* by Verdi, Vestal from *The Vestal Virgin* by Spontini, Elvira from *I Puritani* by Bellini, Nedda from *Pagliacci* by Leoncavallo and many others.



Maria Radoeva, soprano (Bulgaria)

Maria graduated from Pancho Vladigerov National Academy of Music in Sofia in 2006. Between 2004 and 2006, she won numerous competitions in Bulgaria and received a special award at the competition for chamber music in Marl, Germany. In 2006, she took part in the Neue Stimmen competition in Germany and was granted the privilege to participate in an exclusive master class. Since 2006, she has been a student of Raina Kabaivanska in her Master Classes at New Bulgarian University, Academia Musicale Chigiana in Siena and Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena. She is a scholarship holder of Raina Kabaivanska Fund at New Bulgarian University.

In 2010, she debuted on the stage of Sofia Opera and Ballet House in the role of Musetta from *La Bohème* by Puccini, and in 2012, she debuted in the same role on the stage of Italian *Teatro Comunale di Modena* under a project of New Bulgarian University. In 2011, Maria Radoeva was selected among more than 600 applicants for participation in the competition *Cardiff Singer of the World*. In 2008, she was chosen by Maestro Christophe Rousset for his Monteverdi project. In the beginning of 2016, Maria Radoeva made her brilliant debut in *Nabucco* in Erl, Austria during the festival Tiroler Festspiele Erl Betriebsges under the conductorship of world famous Gustav Kuhn

Her repertoire includes the roles of Abigaille from *Nabucco*, *Requiem* by Verdi, soprano part of Handel *Messiah*, Zerlina from *Don Giovanni* by Mozart, Musetta from *La Bohème* by Puccini, soprano solo in *Symphony No. 2* by Gustav Mahler, Anna Glavari from *La vedova allegra*.



Matteo Desole, tenor (Italy)

Since 2013 Matteo Desole has studied under the guidance of Raina Kabaivanska at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena, simultaneously completing his piano studies at Conservatorio di Sassari in Italy. Upon his participation in the XIV International Master Class at New Bulgarian University Desole became a scholarship holder of Raina Kabaivanska Fund at NBU. He won the *National Arts Competition* in Lecce, Italy and *G. Martinelli–A. Pertile International Opera Competition* in Montagnana, Italy.

His repertoire includes the roles of *Poliuto* by Donizetti, Leopold from *La parrucca di Mozart* by Lorenzo Jovanotti and Bruno De Franceschi, *Un Piccolo Principe* featuring music composed by Luca Sirigu, *La notte di un nevrastenico* by Nino Rota, *Il signor Bruschino* by Rossini, Lord Arturo Bucklow from *Lucia di Lammermoor* by Donizetti, Gaston from *La Traviata* by Verdi etc. Currently M. Desole refines his vocal skills with Raina Kabaivanska, also working with Luciano Pavarotti Foundation in Modena and participating in Belcanto performances across Europe.





Shin Je Bang, mezzo-soprano (South Korea)

Shin Je Bang graduated from Santa Cecilia Conservatorium in Rome. In 2011, she started her studies at Academia La Scala and since 2013 has been a student of Raina Kabaivanska in her Master Classes at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena, at *Accademia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena and at New Bulgarian University. Shin Je Bang is a scholarship holder of Raina Kabaivanska Fund.

In 2014, Shin Je Bang ranked second in two International competitions, i.e. *Citta di Iseo* and *Riccardo Zandonai*, and won first prize in the International competition *Premio Boni* at Brescia.

Shin Je Bang debuted in La Scala in 2013 in the role of Lucia from *La Scala di Seta*. Her repertoire includes *Little Miss Baggot Spazzacamin* by Benjamin Britten, Mass in C major Op. 86 of Beethoven, Mass in C minor K. 427 of Mozart, *Messiah* by Handel, *Elijah of Mendelssohn*, the Major Mass of Schubert, *La Cenerentola* by Rossini.

Selene Zanetti, soprano (Italy)

In 2015, after her graduation, Selene Zanetti participated in the Master Class of Raina Kabaivanska in Siena. The same year she participated in the Master Class at New Bulgarian University and won a scholarship to continue refining her vocal skills with Raina Kabaivanska at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena.

Selene Zanetti won a number of prestigious international competitions such as first prize at the competition *In Memoriam of Maria Callas* at Brescia, *Premio Boni*, *Katia Ricciarelli*, *New Voices for Opera Gaetano Fraschini*, *Salvatore Licitra*, *Luigi Ceritelli*, third prize at the competition *Claudio Abbado*. In 2015, she won second place and the special prize for the best performer of Verdi at the competition *Francisco Viñas* in Barcelona as well as the special prize in Madrid.

Selene debuted in a number of opera theatres in Italy (Brescia, Milan, Vicenza, Padova, Mantova, Siena, Verona, Modena) and abroad (Sofia, Moscow, Madrid). In 2015, she gave a concert during the festival Puccini at Torre del Lago. Her stage debut was in the role of *Suor Angelica* from the opera of the same name by Puccini and in the performances of *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto* during the XII festival *In Memoriam of Maria Callas* at Sirmione. S. Zanetti debuted in the role of Leonora from *Il trovatore* at Teatro Regio in Parma.



Simon Lim, basso (South Korea)

Simon Lim started his musical studies in Seoul and in 2010 began to study with Raina Kabaivanska at Vecchi-Tonelli Music Institute in Modena and in her Master Class at New Bulgarian University. He is a scholarship holder of Raina Kabaivanska Fund at New Bulgarian University

Simon Lim made his debut in La Scala in 2007 in the leading part of *Le nozze di Figaro* by Mozart conducted by Giovanni Antonini and later on in *Don Carlo* by Verdi under the conductorship of Daniele Gatti. He has worked with world famous conductors like Omer Meir Wellber, Alberto Zedda, Lorin Maazel. His repertoire includes main parts from *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* by Mozart, *Il matrimonio segreto* by Cimarosa, *L'italiana in Algeri* by Rossini, *Manon* by Massenet, *Eugene Onegin* by Tchaikovsky. He also performs the roles of the monk from *Don Carlo*, Ramfis from *Aida*, Zaharia from *Nabucco* by Verdi, Balthazar from *La Favorite* by Donizetti, Timur from *Turandot* by Puccini etc.



Sofia Soloviy, soprano (Ukraine)

Sofia Soloviy graduated from the National Musical Academy in Ukraine with a degree in Music, Singing and Musicology. In 2000, she moved to Italy where she began her studies with Raina Kabaivanska at the Music Academy in Osimo and *Academia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena. She has received awards at the following competitions: *Corradetti*, *Ottavio Ziino* and *Ferruccio Tagliavini*. She won the first prize and the audience award at *Viotti International Music Competition* for opera singers in Vercelli.

Her repertoire includes the roles of *Elisetta* from *Il matrimonio segreto* by Cimarosa, *Tancredi* and *Semiramide* by Rossini, *Anna Bolena* by Donizetti, *Donna Elvira* from *Don Giovanni*, *Arminda* in *La finta giardiniera*, *Idamante* from *Idomeneo*, the *Countess* in *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Pamina* from *Die Zauberflöte* by Mozart. She also performs roles in *Alcina* by Handel, *Lucrezia Contarini* in *I due Foscari*, *Elena* from *I vespri siciliani* by Verdi, *Alceste* from the opera of the same name by Gluck, *Nedda* from *Pagliacci* by Leoncavallo etc. Sofia Soloviy participates in performances of great opera theatres like: Teatro Real in Madrid, Teatro La Fenice in Venice, Rome Opera and Theatre, Japan, USA and many others. She also performs contemporary music with great success. Thus, Sofia Soloviy has been selected for the main part of *Marta* for the world premiere of *Le Malentendu* by Matteo d'Àmico at the opera festival in Macerata.



“I owe my vocal technique exclusively to Raina Kabaivanska”

Raina Kabaivanska once told me, 'If your voice is in perfect shape 15 days a year, that's really extraordinary. If an important performance falls on one of these 15 days, then you are lucky beyond belief. So rather than trying to find excuses, learn how to sing even when you are in the worst of shapes, both physically and emotionally.' A few years later, I came to realize what she meant.

I met her when she was President of the Jury for the Spoleto International Competition. She came up to me to congratulate me as one of the winners. She shook my hand and then, after a few second's pause, said that we had to get down to work because my vocal technique was in need of an overhaul. She added that my voice deserved the effort.

Andrea Carè

She is a phenomenal woman. She is generous, strong and highly intelligent and has a remarkable sense of self-irony. The key things I learnt from her are courage and enthusiasm. Raina is always optimistic. She is my support and my role model.

I owe my vocal technique exclusively to Raina Kabaivanska.

Veronica Simeoni

She would often tell me, 'Sing! Be an actress!' I was shy and could not relax while singing and she this was her way to encourage me. She is a great performer and a dedicated teacher. She teaches with her heart generously sharing her knowledge and insights. In addition, she really loves to see her students advance and succeed.

Vittoria Yeo

Raina Kabaivanska changed my life! Her extraordinary vocal technique and the power of her personality changed my voice and helped me reach unimaginable horizons. Raina is much more than a great performer and a wonderful teacher. She is a person of high caliber, always kind and thoughtful. All these qualities have contributed to the international image of Raina that we know today.

Virginia Tola

To me, 'charismatic' is the most appropriate word to describe Raina Kabaivanska.

She taught me that successful actors and singers have many other qualities beside the voice.

It is hard to think of something you could wish such a person who has achieved so much. All you can do is be thankful that you have met such a person.

Kostadin Mechkov

My first encounters with Raina Kabaivanska's talent were from records and videos. I was fascinated by her voice and personality. Always beautiful and elegant, she graciously bestowed her talent on us through the amazing art of the opera.

Meeting her opened a whole new world for me! I discovered a wonderful and caring person just like a mother. She was always there to help and encourage me in a difficult situation. She would give me confidence in my abilities and my professional future in time of doubt.

She is a great teacher! Strict and demanding, yet caring, loving and generous beyond belief. I have never encountered another person so capable and willing to share her knowledge and experience.

I have received many special gifts in my life but Raina certainly is the most precious of them all.

Maria Agresta

She is one of the strongest and knowledgeable people I have ever met. Her presence is unique. She taught me to never give up on the goals set by your heart.

Studying with Raina Kabaivanska was a dream come true. I vividly remember my first encounter with her. She smiled at me and my embarrassment and confusion disappeared. My eyes met the gentle eyes of a woman glowing so brightly as if light was coming out of them. She started talking to me very cheerfully and in a split of a second, I felt I was ready to sing.

Maria Radoeva

The encounter with Mrs. Kabaivanska was a turning point in my life! I met her at Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena and then I decided to join her master class in Sofia, at New Bulgarian University, where I spent the best 21 days of training as opera singer in my life. It was perfect musically, vocally and above all artistically!

Mrs. Kabaivanska is my role model and a source of inspiration. She helps me get to know myself, which is crucial for every singer to do.

Selene Zanetti



Raina Kabaivanska Fund

The fund was established in 2002 at New Bulgarian University financed personally by Raina Kabaivanska as a continuation of her charitable work in Bulgaria. Through the years, supporters of Raina Kabaivanska Fund have included individuals and organizations such as America for Bulgaria Foundation, Fantastico, Sofia Municipality, Alpha Bank etc. They contribute to Raina Kabaivanska's cause to further the great tradition of operatic art. The number of scholarships and the amount are determined personally by Raina Kabaivanska at the beginning of each academic year during the Master Class.

The highest achieving participants in the Master Class will receive a scholarship from Raina Kabaivanska Fund at New Bulgarian University in one of the following categories:

- Training in Raina Kabaivanska's Master Class at New Bulgarian University
- Training in Raina Kabaivanska's Master Class at the *Accademia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena, Italy
- One year training by Raina Kabaivanska at *Istituto Superiore di Studi Musicali „O Vecchi - A Tonelli“* in Modena, Italy

So far scholarships have been awarded to over 70 young opera singers who have continued their training and have been introduced to the professional stage by Raina Kabaivanska. Among them are: Evguenia Braynova, Ina Kuncheva, Antonia Radneva, Plamen Kumpikov, Alexander Nossikov, Anton Markov, Maria Radoeva, Diana Vasileva, Kiril Sharbanov, Doroteya Doroteeva, Vera Girginova, Nona Krustnikova, Kostadin Mechkov, Daniel Stefanov, Vesselin Mihailov, Venera Kotlarova, Darina Linkova, Dessislava Stoimenova, Marin Yonchev, Dimitar Arnaudov, Darina Linkova, Daniela Nineva, Srebrina Mineva (Bulgaria); Ekaterina Kuprevska (Belarus), Tamta Tarieshvili (Georgia); Georgios Filadelfevs (Greece); Wadia Abi Raad (Lebanon); Veronica Simeoni, Gabriele Ribis, Candida Guida, Adriana Donadelli, Silvia Fregato, Marco Fruzoni, Cristina Bagio, Maria Agresta, Mateo Ferrara, Eliza Barbero, Pietro Di Bianco, Cinzia Chiarini, Matteo Desole, Selene Zanetti, Lucia Branda (Italy); Lei Ma (China); Eliana Bayón (Argentina); Mark Fawler (Australia); Nadid Shebnem (Turkey); Yasco Sato, Taecko Ishihara (Japan); Givon Nkosi, Pritti Yende (South Africa); José Moreno (Spain); Vittoria Yeo, Yonghyun Ryu, Taesung Lee and Youdae (Jude) Won (South Korea), Eleonora Woinar (Poland), Victoria Kanizo, Elizabeth Hertzberg (USA), Anaïs Mejías Calderon (Puerto Rico), Ana Petricevic (Serbia), Roxana Herrera Diaz (Chile).

On the 18th of December, 2014 on the occasion of the Jubilee Charity Gala concert "Raina Kabaivanska to present the stars of the opera", to celebrate Raina Kabaivanska's 80th birthday, she performed on the same stage as some of her most prominent students and scholars. They are currently recognized stars in some of the world's most famous opera theatres. The Bulgarian audience had the unique opportunity to hear Veronica Simeoni and Andrea Carè (Italy), Sofia Soloviy (Ukraine), Vittoria Yeo (South Korea), Ana Petricevic (Serbia) and younger opera singers such as Maria Radoeva, Kostadin Mechkov and Anton Markov (Bulgaria), Anaïs Mejías (Puerto Rico), Elisa Barbero and Matteo Desole (Italy). They came from all over the world to acknowledge their teacher and motivator. The Gala Concert at the National Palace of Culture featured the choir and the Orchestra of the Sofia Opera and Ballet, conducted by Maestro Nayden Todorov. The event attracted more than 4000 lovers of operatic art. They enjoyed the arias and ensembles from the greatest operatic masterpieces. All the funds raised during the Gala concert will be used to further support the next generation of young opera singers and Raina Kabaivanska's cause.



"I had a very generous woman as a teacher, Mrs. Zita Fumagalli, and would like to do for young people what she did for me... I would like to give back at least part of this kindness."

Raina Kabaivanska

Bank account

New Bulgarian University
21 Montevideo Str., Sofia, Bulgaria
Raiffeisen Bank
SA Nikola Petkov Str.
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IBAN: BG72RZBB91551460052961

Guidelines for the Master Class at New Bulgarian University

- Singers up to the age of 32 with a musical education or students at musical Academies and Universities are eligible to apply for the Master Class.
- To register for the Master Class, applicants are invited to submit the application form available at Raina Kabaivanska's official website www.rainakabaivanska.net
- When invited to audition, applicants should prepare five arias.
- The audition will be conducted by Raina Kabaivanska and she will select ten active participants. She may also elect to invite additional participants.
- Trainees will be supported by rehearsal pianists and an Italian language teacher.
- The best graduates of the Master Class will have the opportunity to participate in a Gala concert with the Sofia Opera and Ballet Orchestra and with the special participation of Raina Kabaivanska.
- The participants with the best achievements will be awarded scholarships by the Raina Kabaivanska fund at New Bulgarian University.
- The Master Class is open to the public.

Fees

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Audition | 15 Euro |
| Active participants | 125 Euro |
| Additional participants | 75 Euro |
| Master Class visitors | 3 Euro |

Bank account

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For information:

www.rainakabaivanska.net

New Bulgarian University, Sofia, 21 Montevideo Str.

George Tekev, Ph.D

Executive Director of New Bulgarian University

+35928110226, gtekev@nbu.bg

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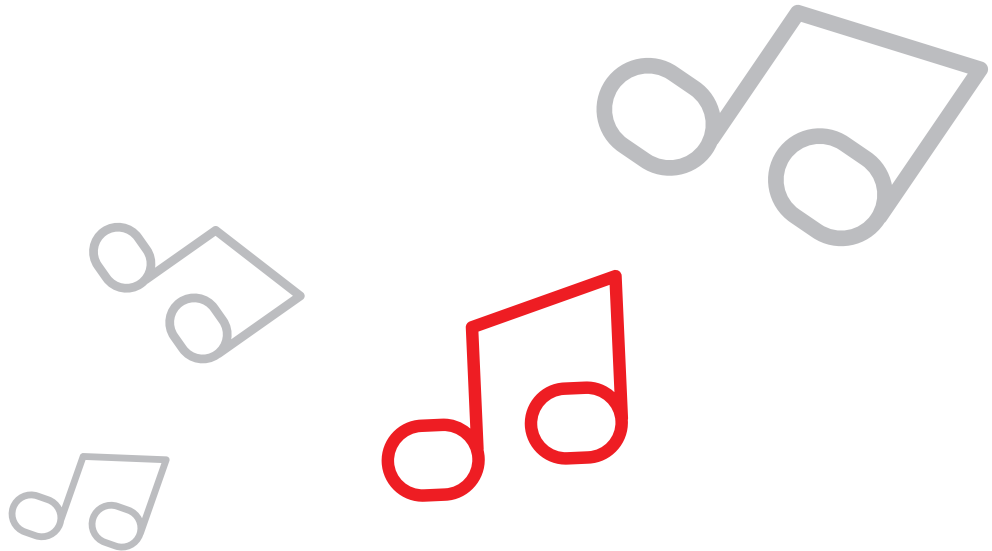
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