

Geeta Novotny, (also credited as **Geeta Bhatnagar**) is a multi-faceted young artist blazing her way through the performing arts world as a singer and an actor. As a classical singer, Ms. Novotny has met abundant acclaim for her powerful, rich mezzo-soprano voice and her captivating stage presence. Thus far in 2007, she has performed the title role in the Handel opera *Flavio* with **Pocket Opera** in San Francisco- as her reviews stated: "*Flavio, the king of Lombardy was intensely sung by mezzo Geeta Novotny...As the monarch, Novotny displayed a commanding, dark sound...she maintained constant contact with the audience and showed a commitment to her character...her presence was undeniably confident and regal.*" (sfcv.org). Also in 2007, Ms. Novotny garnered significant reviews performing the title role in *Carmen* alongside the California-favorite tenor Christopher Campbell as Don Jose, with the **Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra**, the **Roswell Symphony Orchestra**, and the **Santa Maria Philharmonic** under the baton of John Farrer. Her reviews stated: "*The fiery gypsy, Carmen, and her flirtation with all the men was beautifully performed by Geeta Novotny...a flash of her eyes, and a twirl of her skirt, were seductive enough to attract any male near her and she played both to the hilt...the strains of the Seguidilla were performed beautifully by Novotny.*" (The Roswell Daily Record). In 2008, Ms. Novotny will reprise her *Carmen* with Mr. Campbell as Don Jose, along with renowned pianist and flutist Victoria Kirsch and Pamela Vlieg Martchev for a concert with the esteemed **Trinity Lutheran Manhattan Beach Concert Series**. Also in 2008, Ms. Novotny will debut as Mercedes in *Carmen* with the **Pacific Repertory Opera**.

In 2006, Ms. Novotny completed her third consecutive year with the **Los Angeles Opera** portraying the lead female role of Rosina in their nationally acclaimed tour of *Figaro's American Adventure*, an original children's adaptation of the opera *The Barber of Seville*. This production gained national recognition when chosen as a feature on **ABC News' Nightline**. Ms. Novotny believes in the paramount responsibility of keeping opera alive through educational and community outreach. When interviewed by Nightline's journalist David Marash, Ms. Novotny remarked of this production, "*They (the children) are engrossed in the show...if you build upon teaching these children art and different forms of art at a young age, they'll develop a taste for it when they're older. And we hope that we're looking at our future audience.*" In 2005, Ms. Novotny made her mainstage principal role debut with the **Los Angeles Opera** as the 3rd Noble Orphan in *Der Rosenkavalier*. This production was conducted by Kent Nagano and directed by the academy award-winning actor Maximilian Schell.

Also in 2006, Ms. Novotny sang the theme song and lead vocal solos for the soundtrack of the film **Shanghai Red** starring Vivian Wu and Richard Burgi, with original music composed by Randy Miller and produced and directed by Oscar Luis Costo and **MARdeORO Films**. **Shanghai Red** has received rave reviews as an official selection for the **Montreal World Film Festival (2006)**, the **Santa Barbara International Film Festival (2007)**, the **Newport Film Festival (2007)**, and most recently was in competition for the **Jin Jue Award** at the **Shanghai International Film Festival (2007)**.

In 2006, Ms. Novotny's endeavors as an actor included starring in three independent films. She has also performed off-Broadway as a principal actor and music composer with the South Asian **Rasa Theater Company** at the **Theatre Row Theater** in New York City. A review of their inaugural production of the Eugene O'Neill play *Abortion* stated: "*Adding to the Asian atmosphere was the seductive and original Indian music composed and sung by Geeta Bhatnagar.*" (eoneill.com).

Since making her solo debut at **Carnegie Hall** in 2002, Ms. Novotny has had the opportunity to sing with several symphony orchestras throughout the U.S. Some highlights include performances

as the alto soloist, along with her soprano sister, Dana Bhatnagar-Vachharajani, in the *Mozart Requiem* with the **Pro Arte Chorale** and the **Haddonfield Symphony** (2004). Prior to that, Ms. Novotny made her **New Jersey Symphony Orchestra** debut as a featured soloist in *Much Ado About Shakespeare*. These performances she reprised with her sister, and the emmy-nominated actress Claire Bloom as the narrator; performing as the soloists in Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; along with performing the vocal solos of: Arne's *Three Shakespeare Songs* and Chilcot's *Orpheus With His Lute*. They performed under the baton of Nicholas McGegan and were accompanied by The Women of the Pro Arte Chorale. Their reviews stated: "*Dana and Geeta Bhatnagar had appealing stage presence to match their committed singing*" (New Jersey Star Telegram). "...*But it was mezzo-soprano Geeta Bhatnagar, who showed off a dramatic sound and stage presence in 'Fear no more the heat 'o the sun' (Cymbeline)...her sheer intensity overcame a purist's objections.*" (classicalnjsociety.org).

Ms. Novotny and her sister also had the great fortune of becoming the Grand Prize Winners of the **2003 International Young Artist Peninsula Music Festival Competition** in Palos Verdes, CA. This win also led to radiant reviews: "*The Grand Prize Award went to two sisters: mezzo-soprano Geeta Bhatnagar and soprano, Dana Bhatnagar, who introduced duet performance to the Festival with personalities and performances that left no doubt why Carnegie Hall and the Met booked them before YAPMF... With voices superbly matched and with musical interpretive styling that added drama to the songs, the Bhatnagars roamed an emotional and melodic spectrum. Enough said about such glorious music, as also heard from the Bhatnagars amid stand-up applause.*" (Peninsula News).

For Ms. Novotny and Ms. Vachharajani, this achievement had been a wonderful addition to the above-mentioned honor of their **Carnegie Hall** debuts as the featured soloists in Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In these performances Jaime Laredo conducted the New York String Orchestra and the Young People's Chorus of New York City, along with Claire Bloom as the narrator. The Sisters first performed this work with Ms. Bloom at the **Aspen Music Festival** with the **Aspen Chamber Symphony** under the baton of David Zinman.

Also in 2003, Ms. Novotny performed with the **Metropolitan Opera Orchestra**, under the baton of Ormsby Wilkins, as the mezzo-soprano soloist with the **American Ballet Theatre** at the **Metropolitan Opera House** in Sir Frederick Ashton's ballet *The Dream*. That same year, Ms. Novotny received great accolade for her strong performance in the role of Maddalena in *Rigoletto* with the **Amarillo Opera**.

In 2002, Ms. Novotny completed the apprenticeship with the **Utah Opera** where she toured extensively and starred in the role of Sarica in the World Premiere of the opera *Illusions*. Prior to that, she met notable praise for her performances as the 1st Prioress in *Dialogues des Carmélites* with the **Aspen Opera Theater Center** under the baton of James Conlon and the direction of Edward Berkeley. That same year, Ms. Novotny performed the title role in Rossini's *Cinderella* with the **Fort Worth Touring Opera**: "*The dark-haired Geeta Bhatnagar was a very believable Cinderella...the singing was generally beautiful and effective from Cinderella's flawless mezzo-soprano.*" (Ranger Times).

Ms. Novotny has completed two years of graduate studies and a teaching fellowship pursuing a Master of Music at the **University of North Texas** where she performed under the baton of Dr. Steven Dubberly and the direction of Paula Homer in the roles of: Rebecca Nurse in *The Crucible*, Margot in *The Merry Widow*, and the 1st Prioress in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. She also holds a

B.F.A. from **Carnegie Mellon University** where she performed under the baton of Dr. Robert Page in the roles of: The Third Lady in *The Magic Flute*, Ottavia in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Vera Boronel in *The Consul*, and Nun II in *Suor Isabella*, having the opportunity to work with directing talents such as: Stephen Schwartz, Elizabeth Bachman, Rhoda Levine, Dorothy Danner, Peter Frisch, Greg Lehane, and Janet Bookspan. Ms. Novotny's other roles include Le Mort in Stravinsky's *Le Rossignol* under the baton of Julius Rudel and the direction of Garnett Bruce with the **Aspen Opera Theater Center**; and Mrs. Nolan in *The Medium* with the **92nd Street Y** in New York City. Her musical theater roles include: Anita in *West Side Story*, Mrs. Jones in *Street Scene*, Dolly in *Hello Dolly!*, Baroness Schrader in the *Sound of Music*, and Lucinda in *Into the Woods*.

Ms. Novotny has performed and studied with the American Institute of Musical Studies (**AIMS**) in Graz, Austria, where she was a finalist in the **AIMS International Meistersinger Competition** under the baton of Cornelius Eberhardt. She has also performed as the alto soloist in oratorio works such as: Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Handel's *Messiah*, the Bach *Magnificat*, the Mozart *Coronation Mass*, Libby Larsen's *Eleanor Roosevelt*, and has been a featured soloist with Pittsburgh, PA's famed **River City Brass Band**.

Ms. Novotny and her sister, Ms. Vachharajani, comprise the vocal duo **The Bhatnagar Sisters**. They have headlined several recitals throughout the U.S. and successfully released their first CD in 2002 entitled **Duets**. This duo performs everything from opera and art song to musical theater, pop, and jazz works. They are also on the roster for the charitable organization **Sing for Hope**, where they sing to champion keeping music education alive in public schools.

Ms. Novotny also enjoys a career as a journalist where she is the music columnist and a contributing writer for the New York City-based magazine **The Indian American**.

Born in Missouri, Ms. Novotny is of South Asian Indian and Irish descent and was raised in rural Western Pennsylvania. She is very thankful for the love and support of her family and friends and in turn feels incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to pursue the many passions in her life. She aspires to continue to educate and to inspire hope, dialogue, and optimism through her art.