

# Alan Opie

## Selected Reviews

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### 'Opera for All' Gala English National Opera (March 2018)

"Individual contributions shone: ... Alan Opie as richly resonant and darkly nuanced as ever in a scene from Rigoletto" – **Henrietta Bredin, Opera Magazine**

### La Traviata English National Opera (March 2018)

"It is left to veteran Alan Opie as Giorgio Germont — astonishingly marking his 50th anniversary with the company — to show how words and music are all that is needed to make opera come alive." – **Richard Fairman, Financial Times**

"it's only when the stalwart Alan Opie comes on as Germont that we enter a believable operatic reality, in response to which Boyle raises her game. The duet-duel is sung with conviction" – **Michael Church, The Independent**

"It's up to the baritone Alan Opie, whose performance as Alfredo's authoritarian father celebrates 50 years with ENO, to inject some true vocal class, and to fly the flag for the idea that singing opera in English – ENO's USP – is a good thing" – **Erica Jeal, The Guardian**

"it takes an old pro, Alan Opie as Germont (marking 50 years with ENO), to get to the heart of Verdi... every word he sings matters." – **Neil Fisher, The Times**

"Providing something close to a model of Verdi singing, however, is Alan Opie, in his 50th year with the company, as Alfredo's father, Giorgio Germont. Binding notes and words together, he alone maintains the vocal standards in a principal role ENO needs to achieve; his performance is duly received with an ovation." – **George Hall, The Stage**

### The Barber of Seville English National Opera (October 2017)

"The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the production was further celebrated by the appearance of *Alan Opie*, the original Figaro, in the role of Don Bartolo. Opie's acting was terrific, and his voice remains in excellent shape." – **Ditlev Rindom, Opera Magazine**

"The movement style is pure commedia dell'arte, and the cast includes experienced farceurs led with blustering self-importance and perfect timing by Alan Opie (this production's original Figaro) as Bartolo." – **Michael Church, The Independent**

"Alan Opie, who amazingly enough sang the title role when the production was new, has great fun in his role debut as the irascible Bartolo, and so do we." – **Mark Valencia, What's on Stage**

### Idomeneo Metropolitan Opera (March 2017)

"Alan Opie sang handsomely as a baritone Arbace" – **George Loomis, Opera Magazine**

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### ***Der Rosenkavalier***

**Boston Symphony Orchestra (September 2016)**

"Alan Opie was a pleasingly high-flown Faninal." – **Zoë Madonna, *The Boston Globe***

### ***Dream of Gerontius***

**Royal Scottish National Orchestra (May 2015)**

"Baritone Alan Opie sang the roles of the priest, and the Angel of the Agony with a rich, fortified sound, perfectly suited to the lavish, dramatic music." – **Miranda Heggie, *The Herald* \*\*\*\*\***

### ***Merry Widow***

**Metropolitan Opera (April 2015)**

"Alan Opie acted with class" – **Zachary Woolfe, *New York Times***

"Bass Alan Opie, as Baron Mirko Zeta, led the supporting characters. What little singing he had was effective, but his quick delivery of his lines kept the pace going." – **George Grella, *New York Classical Review***

"Much of the dialogue, including punch-lines, is given to Baron Zeta, excellently portrayed by Opie with keen comedic timing." – **David M. Rice, *Classical Source***

### ***Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf***

**Bergen Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra (CHSA5149)**

"Alan Opie is a noble, affirmative baritone Ironbeard, representative of the pagan gods." – **John Warrack, *International Record Review***

### ***Klinghoffer***

**Metropolitan Opera (October 2014)**

"The baritone Alan Opie sings Leon with an elegant blend of poignancy and feistiness. The character has only two riveting monologues, the first in Act II, when Leon, unable to bear any more from these bullying punks, dares to denounce them. Later, the body of Leon sings a final monologue, like a benediction, in music that surrounds ethereal vocal lines with shimmering strings and pungent harmonies spiked with dissonance." – **Anthony Tommasini, *New York Times***

"The part of Leon was created by Sanford Sylvan, and is being sung at the Met by Alan Opie, whose baritone is much darker and rougher than Sylvan's gentle, silky voice. Opie is devastating in the role. His voice carries gravitas and meaning, and he projects a sound that is very much like that of an old man singing. He is earthy, real, and from the moment he is first heard in Act II, bitterly standing down the terrorists for their cowardice, explosive." – **George Grella, *New York Classical Review***

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"The Klinghoffers do come off sympathetically, with Leon (a superb Alan Opie) rising from his wheelchair at one point to angrily rebuke the kidnappers." – **Frank Scheck, *New York Post***

"Alan Opie's Klinghoffer and Paulo Szot's Captain (both baritones) are gruff. But both manage to convey the unutterable sadness of the opera's last scenes, which include Klinghoffer's haunting aria sung by his lifeless body as it sinks in the sea." – **Mark Swed, *Los Angeles Times***

"Alan Opie, who was moving and crusty as Klinghoffer, and Michaela Martens, warm and deep-voiced as his wife Marilyn, were, not surprisingly, crowd favourites..." – **Anne Midgette, *Washington Post***

"The eloquent baritone Alan Opie did have a great moment that presumably went a long way to silencing the evening's protesters." – **Manuela Hoeltherhoff, *Bloomberg***

### ***La Traviata***

#### **Welsh National Opera (February 2014)**

"It was Georgio Germont, with Alan Opie's interpretation as reliable and as musical as one might expect, who rang truest, and ultimately his sympathy for Violetta and guilt at his earlier intervention was palpable." – **Rian Evans, *Opera Magazine***

"It was Alan Opie, in the role of Germont père, who showed suppleness: his words were given meaning and his voice was full of feeling." – **Rian Evans, *The Guardian***

"Almost everyone is overshadowed by the magnificent Alan Opie as Germont's father." – **Nigel Jarrett, *South Wales Argus***

"Alan Opie has gravitas as Germont." – **Mike Smith, *Wales Online***

### ***Peter Grimes***

#### **Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia (October 2013)**

"There were memorable performances from... Alan Opie." – **Luigi Bellingardi, *Opera Magazine***

### ***The Beauty Stone***

#### **Chandos CHAN10794(2)**

"...the luxurious richness of Alan Opie's nuanced baritone. [...] his clearly relished, magnificently sung portrayal is what, more than anything, brings this set alive." – **Graham Rogers, *International Record Review***

"As prime mover of the action, Alan Opie revels in his Faustian role as the Devil, appearing in various guises, his every word ringing out in gleeful tones." – **Adrian Edwards, *Gramophone Magazine***

### ***Peter Grimes***

#### **London Philharmonic Orchestra (September 2013)**

"Alan Opie's Balstrode is wonderfully seasoned and laconic." – **Andrew Clements, *The Guardian* \*\*\*\*\***

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"Alan Opie's experienced Balstrode had depth." – **John Allison, *The Telegraph* \*\*\*\***

"A year and half off 70, Alan Opie remains in good voice as the Balstrode of choice." – **David Nice, *The Arts Desk***

"Alan Opie's Balstrode personified the old sea dog who had seen all, known all." – **Hilary Finch, *The Times* \*\*\*\***

### ***The Merry Widow***

#### **Philharmonia Orchestra (November 2012)**

"Alan Opie plays a robust Baron Zeta." – **Hilary Finch, *The Times***

"...a stalwart performance from Alan Opie." – **Martin Kettle, *The Guardian***

"The excellent Alan Opie as Baron Zeta (who one wished had had more to sing)..." – **Edward Seckerson, *The Arts Desk***

"Nearly 30 years on, the always reliable Alan Opie was a grizzled – but still young-at-heart – Baron Zeta, and I wished Lehár had given him more to sing." – **Jim Pritchard, *Seen and Heard***

### ***War Requiem, Royal Festival Hall***

"He was partnered in these grief-filled Wilfred Owen settings by the ageless Alan Opie, somber of mood and rich of timbre." – **Mark Valencia, *Classical Source***

### ***Gianni Schicchi, Opera Holland Park***

"Alan Opie gives a towering, gleeful performance in the title role." – **Tim Ashley, *The Guardian***

"Alan Opie is a world-class Schicchi" – **Warwick Thompson, *Metro***

"there's plenty of comic life in a cast dominated by Alan Opie's worldly wise Schicchi" – **Richard Morrison, *The Times***

"Alan Opie made Schicchi a wicked study in lower-class opportunism." – **Richard Fairman, *The Financial Times***

"What distinguished this cast from many others was the thoroughly Italian, highly-charged atmosphere it created, crystallised by the appearance of Alan Opie's supreme Schicchi. Oozing street cred, his expression alone showed that this would be a routine job for him. So it proved. While members of the Donati family bundled the body in and out of cupboards, he calmly called the shots, his baritone in fine fettle." – **Martin Dreyer, *Opera***

"a great performance by Alan Opie" – **Robert Thicknesse, *Opera Now***

"Alan Opie's Schicchi is perfectly judged from start to finish." – **George Hall, *The Stage***

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"Alan Opie, needless to say, stole the show as Schicchi himself, dominating the action from his Jean Gabin-like arrival to the triumphant glee of his cackling farewell." – **Mark Valencia, *WhatsOnStage.com***

"the splendid Schicchi of Alan Opie, whose commanding presence, convinced both in sly characterisation and his sonorous baritone; one never doubted the venal Donati clan had little chance against his scheming." – **John E de Wald, *Opera Britannia***

"Alan Opie is a charismatic Schicchi, a notable assumption...Opie ensures that Schicchi's final speech (to the audience) gets him off the hook. No jury would convict!" – **Colin Anderson, *ClassicalSource.com***

### **Delius - A Mass of Life, Naxos Recording**

"...But the real revelation on record in 2012 came from the Bach Choir's recording of Delius's *A Mass of Life*: strong choral singing, penetrating direction from David Hill and a heroic turn in the lead role from Alan Opie. – **David Thresher, *Gramophone***

His soloists are outstanding...but the star is Alan Opie, whose lyrical singing is wonderful." – **Hugh Canning, *The Sunday Times***

"Alan Opie, who has the lion's share of the solo music in the work, is almost Wotan-like in his performances. From his first Nietzschean dance he is majestic and brings out of the score that vibrant, heady, Teutonic contemporaneity with which Delius had clearly become enthralled at this point in his career. Opie's singing of what s effectively the role of Zarathustra has immense authority and his impressive range (up to high G) is ideal for Delius' onerous vocal demands." – **Jeremy Dibble, *Gramophone***

"The baritone soloist, to all intents and purposes the voice of the philosopher in this work, is Cornishman Alan Opie – 'a legend', as Hill describes him, and a veteran of that 2009 centenary performance. Back at the session, he is unstintingly ardent in all the strenuous demands of this large and challenging role." – **David Thresher, *Gramophone***

"The singing is suitably majestic for Nietzsche's vision of mankind's destiny...with soloists – chief among them Alan Opie – in magnificent form." – **Stephen Pritchard, *The Observer***

"Any performance of *A Mass of Life* stands or falls by its soloists, and in particular the baritone, who embodies Zarathustra and thus Nietzsche himself. The name Alan Opie is a guarantee of quality, and so turns out to be. His assumption of the role is calm and sober, though not at all lacking in passion, and with great nobility of utterance when required. He is on top vocal form in this taxing music, with even a certain tenor-like quality - in the fifth movement of the first part for example - and a ringing top G minutes before the close. He is very impressive indeed in the soliloquies near the beginning of Part 2, and without a hint of excess, even managing to minimize the occasional hint of bombast in the music; this admirable singer convinces more than any of his rivals...The performance of the Mass is superbly paced by Hill, and Opie is magnificent." – **William Hedley, *International Record Review***

"a magnificent quartet of soloists (especially Alan Opie)" – **Philip Reed, *Choir & Organ***

"it was Alan Opie who carried the brunt of the singing...His account of 'Zarathustra's Nachtlied' (Part 2, Section 6) can rank with the finest this near-operatic soliloquy has received and his overall contribution lacked for nothing in authority and insight." – **Richard Whitehouse, *ClassicalSource.com***

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### ***La Fille du Regiment*** **Royal Opera House (April 2012)**

"Most of the secondary roles go well...Alan Opie blusters his way amiably through Sergeant Sulpice." - **George Hall, *The Guardian***

"Newcomer Alan Opie plays the flamboyantly moustached Sergeant Sulpice with enjoyable relish" - **Graham Rogers, *The Stage***

"Ann Murray, Alan Opie and Donald Maxwell add accomplished support..." - **David Gillard, *Daily Mail***

"As the French regiment whom fate has made her collective father, the ROH chorus have a ball. Hard-hatted, diverse in age and fronted by the vast girth of Alan Opie's Sulpice, the sight of them alone is smile-worthy: a kind of Napoleonic Dad's Army." - **Kieran Quirke, *Evening Standard***

"Sulpice felt a much bigger part than it probably is thanks to Alan Opie's excellent comic-timing." - **Kevin Rogers, *Classicalsource.com***

"The standard was also upheld by veteran singers Ann Murray (Marquise de Berkenfeld), Alan Opie (Sulpice Pingot) and Donald Maxwell (Hortensius). Indeed, throughout the performance we witnessed the admirable capabilities of 'the human voice'." - **Agnes Kory, *MusicalCriticism.com***

### ***The Death of Klinghoffer*** **English National Opera (February 2012)**

"All of the solo roles are taken memorably too...especially Alan Opie as Leon Klinghoffer himself, who sings his final number, the Aria of the Falling Body, which Adams calls a gymnopédie, with devastating simplicity." - **Andrew Clements, *The Guardian***

"the excellent Alan Opie" - **Edward Seckerson, *The Independent***

"with Alan Opie and Michaela Martens outstanding as Mr and Mrs Klinghoffer." - **Richard Fairman, *The Financial Times***

"Outstanding among an admirable cast are Alan Opie..." - **Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph***

"The staging is often dark and indistinct despite brilliant moments: one was the choreographed depiction of the dead Klinghoffer and his wheelchair falling to the ocean bed as his ghostly double (movingly performed by Alan Opie) sings his "Aria of the Falling Body". A top ensemble cast deserves high praise" - **Fiona Maddocks, *The Observer***

"(Alan Opie) heartbreakingly eloquent in the "Aria of the Falling Body"" - **Anna Pickard, *Independent on Sunday***

"But the musical performance is compelling. Alan Opie is a believable, human Klinghoffer" - **Mark Swed, *Los Angeles Times***

"...Alan Opie's Klinghoffer and Michaela Martens as his wife...both excel..." - **Alexandra Coughlin, *New Statesman***

"The scene in which Klinghoffer is murdered ratchets up the tension to an almost unbearable degree. Alan Opie's singing of the consequent Aria of the Falling Body has a surreal poignancy." - **George Hall, *The Stage***

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"If Klinghoffer's aria verges on strained poetic gobbledygook, musically it's one of the highlights of the evening: That's the paradox of the work. The aria sounds languorous, glittering, full of pathos, and baritone Alan Opie(Klinghoffer) sings it with a buttery seductive voice." – **Warwick Thompson, Bloomberg**

"As Klinghoffer himself, Alan Opie was as secure and as dramatic as one might expect from this experienced singer. We first encounter him properly in his Act 2 aria "I've never been a violent man". Opie projected real pride in presenting Klinghoffer's *Weltanschauung* before revealing his (here eminently believable) anger against the terrorists...His later aria, "May the Lord God and his Creation be magnified" (the "Aria of the Falling Body") was simply beautiful." – **Colin Clarke, Seen and Heard International**

"Outstanding [was] Alan Opie in the title role" – **Andrew Porter, Opera Magazine**

"ENO fielded a consistently excellent cast...Alan Opie sang a perfectly judged Klinghoffer, provocative and yet rigorously honest in his response to the terrorist outrage." – **Ashutosh Khandekar, Opera Now**

"Klinghoffer, sung powerfully by Alan Opie" – **David Karlin, BachTrack**

"Alan Opie gives yet another impressive performance as Klinghoffer, with a great clarity of diction and a moving portrayal of an innocent man who was sacrificed." - **Miranda Jackson, Opera Britannia**

"All of this made me feel sorry for the singers, who were quite magnificent. Alan Opie as Klinghoffer and Michaela Martens as his wife sang and acted their parts with real conviction" - **William Harston, Daily Express**

"the most impressive performance of the night comes from Alan Opie as Leon Klinghoffer. Opie conveys an authority of voice and of dramatic presence that is all the more striking for being contrasted with the hijackers' general scattiness (that is with the exception of Sidney Outlaw's haughty Rambo, with whom Klinghoffer quickly comes into conflict). Worries that the character is being presented to satisfy the hijackers and our own prejudices about rich American tourists (Jewish or not) are profoundly alleviated by Opie's post-death aria, 'The Aria of the Falling Body', which is comparable to Dr. Atomic's 'Batter My Heart' as a tragic aria bearing the emotional weight of an Adams opera, where much of the surrounding musical momentum and promise finally gets resolved in a sense of real existential commitment. Opie delivers the aria with as much simple, affecting grace as he discharged his earlier music with puffed-up upset." - **Stephen Graham, Musical Criticism.com**

"Alan Opie portrays Klinghoffer strongly and his dignified, calm manner contrasts to the terrorists' thuggish, brutal outlook." - **Rachel Phillips, The Londonist**

"ENO's staging is excellent. Alan Opie's dignified Klinghoffer leads a cast in which Christopher Magiera (Captain), Richard Burkhard (Mamoud), Michaela Martens (Marilyn Klinghoffer) and Clare Presland (Palestinian Woman) also stand out." - **John Allison, The Daily Telegraph**

"Extrêmement émouvant, en revanche, le couple Klinghoffer : dans son fauteuil roulant, Alan Opie a l'âge du rôle mais la voix conserve son éloquence, notamment dans son deuxième discours, la « Gymnopédie » retraçant son exécution et sa noyade, qui donne lieu à un superbe moment de pantomime dansée." - **Laurent Bury, Forumopera.com**

"einzig der Opernroutinier Alan Opie als Leon Klinghoffer vermochte stimmlich wie mimisch aus der auferlegten Lethargie auszubrechen." - **Stepgan Burianek, Wiener Zeitung**

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### ***Cunning Little Vixen***

**New York Philharmonic (June 2011)**

"The cast, singing Norman Tucker's English translation of Janacek's own Czech libretto, is excellent...there was no problem making out the words of the robust baritone Alan Opie as the Forester, who brought out the character's internal conflicts...The lucky audience on Wednesday gave everyone involved a cheering ovation." – **Anthony Tommasini, *New York Times***

### ***Falstaff***

**Opéra national du Rhin (June/July 2009)**

"Le baryton Alan Opie, lauréat d'un Olivier Award pour le rôle-titre de cet opéra, s'impose comme un grand chanteur doublé d'un merveilleux acteur: d'une fatuité sans borne au départ, il se casse le nez sur la malignité des femmes et conclut désabusé qu'en effet, il est trop vieux, trop gros, que ses cheveux sont gris et que le monde est bien méchant: «Tout dans le monde est farce... Chaque mortel se moque d'autrui, mais rit bien qui rit le dernier" – **L'Alsace, 21.6.09**

### ***Rosenkavalier***

**Wiener Staatsoper (April 2008)**

"Und Alan Opie gefaellt als pyknischer Herr von Faninal, dem man seine Schrecken und drohende Ohnmacht wegen der delikaten Vorkommnisse absolute glaubt." – **Volkmar Parschalk, *Kronenzeitung***

### ***Rigoletto***

**Opera Co. Philadelphia (October 2007)**

"Cornish baritone Alan Opie is as convincing as any Rigoletto I've ever seen, and my experiences go back to the days of Leonard Warren, Robert Merrill and Cornell MacNeil. Opie's singing is lovely, although his voice does not have their lush sound – but who does, nowadays. Opie surpasses them in creating a human being with whom we empathize. His devotion to his daughter, his heartbreak when she's seduced, and his desire for vengeance are totally believable." – **Steve Cohen, *The Opera Critic***

### **Nabucco recording, Chandos**

"At last. British baritone Alan Opie confirms that he is, as his fans have long maintained, one of the few truly great Verdi baritones of his generation. From his first, majestic entrance, through to his compassionate, legato-laced redemption, Opie need fear no comparison with any rivals (OK, Tito Gobbi had that unforgettable bite in the voice, but in every other respect Opie is even his equal)..." – **James Inverne, *Gramophone***

"Heading the cast is Alan Opie, perhaps giving his best performance to date on disc. He reveals every facet of the trouble king's character. His early wilfulness, followed by madness and then his conversion to Jehovah, are all depicted with an unerring

feeling for every work of the text. Of course the core of the opera comes in the great Act 3 duet with Abigail, then the noble solo "Lord God of Judah", which Opie sings with proper sorrow and contrition." – **Alan Blyth, *Gramophone***

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### **Death In Venice, City of London Sinfonia, Hickox**

"I chose the concert performance which preceded this recording of this great work as my outstanding opera experience of 2004. It is exactly reproduced here, with the advantage of better balance in the subsidiary roles and off-stage chorus... Alan Opie's marvellous assumption of the seven roles allotted to the baritone for which he unfailingly produces the right timbre and expression, whether sinister, smarmy, mocking or menacing." – **Michael Kennedy, Sunday Telegraph**

### **Cunning Little Vixen**

#### **La Scala (June 2003)**

"Alan Opie delicato e sensibile, era il Guardiacaccia ideale per questa interpretazione, con i suoi accenti vibranti e malinconici... Uno spettacolo appassionante e curato, salutato con gradissimo calore dal pubblico in sala." – **Sergio Bestente, Il giornale della musica**

### **Benvenuto Cellini**

#### **Metropolitan Opera (December 2003)**

"Alan Opie created a wonderfully unattractive Fieramosca," – **Shirley Fleming MusicalAmerica.com**