
Morgan Smith

Selected Reviews

Riders of the Purple Sage, Arizona Opera

February & March 2017

As her helper, the gunslinger Lassiter, Morgan Smith gave us a stunning performance of a role in which the character's personality gradually unfolds and grows in complexity.

Maria Nockin, Opera Today, 7 March 2017

On opening night in Tucson, the lead roles of Jane and Lassiter were sung by soprano Karin Wolverton and baritone Morgan Smith, who both deliver memorable arias. Smith plays Lassiter with vintage Clint Eastwood menace as he growls out his provocative maxim, "A man without a gun is only half a man."

Kerry Lengel, Arizona Republic, 27 February 2017

Moby-Dick, Dallas Opera

November 2016

Morgan Smith brings a dense, dark baritone to the role of Starbuck, the ship's voice of reason

Scott Cantrell, Dallas News, 5 November 2016

Morgan Smith, who played Starbuck, gave a stunningly powerful performance in this scene, making the internal conflict in the character believable and real.

Keith Cerny, Theater Jones, 6 December 2016

First Mate Starbuck is again sung by baritone Morgan Smith, who offers convincing muscularity and authority.

J. Robin Coffelt, Texas Classical Review, 6 November 2016

Morgan Smith finely acted in the role of second in command, Starbuck, and his singing was even finer. When Starbuck attempts to dissuade Captain Ahab from his fool's mission to wreck vengeance on the white whale, the audience was treated to the evening's most powerful and passionate singing — his duets with tenor Jay Hunter Morris as Ahab in particular.

Monica Smart, Dallas Observer, 8 November 2016

Madama Butterfly, Kentucky Opera

September 2016

With a diplomatic air and a rich, velvety baritone, he upheld the title of Consul and caretaker in a fatherly way. Despite not having what one would consider to be a true aria, he expresses all of his phrases with strength and assurance.

Arts-Louisville.com, Annette Skaggs, 26 September 2016

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Oregon Bach Festival, MacMillan Requiem

July 2016

Baritone Morgan Smith produced a rich and hefty sound and brought solemnity and a hint of rage to his several solo sections...

Terry McQuilkin, The Register-Guard, 6 July 2016

Les Contes d'Hoffmann, Madison Opera

April 2016

Offenbach intended the nemesis to be represented, in a total of four personifications, by the same singer, and bass-baritone Morgan Smith brings them all off with marvelous variety and flair.

Isthmus, John W. Barker

Baritone Morgan Smith, a fine performer, plays his dastardly roles with humor and great physicality. His Act II costume makes him look like Bela Lugosi with ET's long, gnarly fingers, so he wisely leans toward camp rather than menace.

The Capital Times, Lindsay Christians, 16 April 2016

Le Nozze di Figaro, Seattle Opera

January 2016

The outstanding performances of the opening-night cast came from the aristo couple. Morgan Smith's warm-voiced Almaviva was intensely likeable and obviously still in love with his wife but frustrated by his inability to control the chaos around him...

Thomas May, Bachtrak, 17 January 2016

Suave firebrand Morgan Smith as the Count ... Smith was particularly successful as the Count, a wonderful blend of the seductive, the boorish, the bewildered and the repentant.

Melinda Bargreen, Seattle Times, 17 January 2016

Morgan Smith was unexpectedly appealing as Count Almaviva, with his potent baritone and fluctuating between his ill-mannered lordliness, sexy seductiveness and jealousy-provoking love for his wife.

Maggie Larick, Queen Anne & Magnolia News, 20 January 2016

The male performer of the evening. That honor goes to baritone Morgan Smith as pompous and ridiculous Count Almaviva. His seamless comic timing was unimpeachable...

Angela Allen, Oregon Artswatch, 22 January 2016

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Moby-Dick, Los Angeles Opera

October 2015

Smith's baritone begged, cajoled, and cautioned his captain. Smith sang it all with warmth and ardor – his presence solid and reassuring even when his anxiety mounted. ...Smith wrenched our hearts as he gave vent to his stricken conscience.

Seen and Heard international, Jane Rosenberg, 2 November 2015

Morgan Smith's Starbuck is more tortured than Ahab, which makes him a dramatically good foil.

LA Times, Mark Swed, 2 November 2015

Morgan Smith gives a fine performance as the no-nonsense, economically conscious first mate, Starbuck, the only man that sees Ahab's obsession as a formula for certain doom.

LA Daily News, Jim Farber, 2 November 2015

Morgan Smith provided an eloquent, melodious Starbuck.

Orange County Register, Timothy Mangan, 1 November 2015

Baritone Morgan Smith is especially moving as Starbuck, the ship's mate who considers killing Ahab in order to save the crew from his dangerous obsessions with the titular great white whale.

Laist.com, Lyle Zimskind, 5 November 2015

Ahab's foil, and conscience, Mr Starbuck, was sung by Morgan Smith, who created the role. A naturally grainy sound, Mr Smith's baritone was ideally suited for the first mate. It is a role that Heggie imbues with sympathy and complexity. Starbuck's pious struggle is a remarkable creation of music and character thanks to Heggie and Smith, and pitted against Morris' Ahab, this was must-see theater.

Bachtrack, Matthew Richard Martinez, 9 November 2015

Smith has been singing Starbuck since the Dallas premiere, and his virile baritone is colored with nuance and emotion, especially in a refreshingly melodic Act II duet about Nantucket with Ahab.

Frontiers Media, Christopher Cappiello, 23 November 2015

Madama Butterfly, Opéra de Montréal

September 2015

Morgan Smith, an American baritone making his Opéra de Montréal debut, got a big hand for his dark-toned, but sympathetic, portrayal of Sharpless.

Montreal Gazette, Arthur Kaptainis, 20 September, 2015

...while Morgan Smith's Sharpless won the prize for best voice..

Avant-Scène Opéra, Louis Bilodeau, 19 September 2015

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An American Dream, Seattle Opera

August 2015

The singing was uniformly excellent. (...) As the American husband, baritone Morgan Smith, a former Seattle Opera Young Artist, produced especially handsome volumes of tone that grew convincingly darker and more emphatic.

Jason Victor Serinus, Classical Voice North America, 25 August 2015

Morning Star, Cincinnati Opera

July 2015

Morgan Smith is an amazing baritone and I wish that Aaron's character had more depth, but Smith makes it his own and it's worth hearing.

Anne Arenstein, Cincinnati City Beat, 1 July 2015

Smith's firm baritone and natural stage presence were assets in the role of Becky's boarder-turned-suitor. Gordon's song for him, "Marry Me, Becky," had the kind of instant appeal that is destined for life beyond the opera stage.

Janelle Gelfand, Cincinnati Enquirer, 1 July 2015

Carmen, Pittsburgh Opera

March 2015

Carmen's chemistry with Escamillo, portrayed by Morgan Smith, was a different story. The baritone, also in his company debut, delivered a striking physical and vocal demeanor, and his compelling, dark-hued performance of the Toreador Song featured equal parts grit and cockiness.

Elizabeth Bloom, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Morgan Smith, in the role of Escamillo, also made his Pittsburgh Opera debut. He is a striking figure and made the most of the comparatively small role. His rendition of the famous "Toreador Song" was a treat.

George B. Parous, The Pittsburgh Stage Online Magazine

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La Bohème, San Diego Opera

January 2015

The most impressive voice on stage belonged to Smith. He's also a superb actor and his voice was always in service to his character.

James Chute, UT San Diego

Morgan Smith as the ring leader, Marcello, sang with a distinct gravelly baritone.

Matthew Richard Martinez, Bachtrack

Among the men, the standouts are baritone Morgan Smith...

Pat Launer, Times of San Diego

As Rodolfo's sidekick Marcello, Morgan Smith reproduced the vocal beauty he displayed as Starbuck in SDO's 2012 Moby-Dick. The voice is simply gorgeous. His bursts of temperament as the archetypal volatile artist and jealous lover were wholly believable and empathetic.

Erica Miner, Opera Pulse

Jake Heggie: Out of Darkness Naxos recording

November 2014

The recording captures the 2013 song-cycle version of "For a Look or a Touch", powerfully sung by baritone Morgan Smith, who also is heard in "Farewell Auschwitz."

Melinda Bargreen, The Seattle Times

Baritone Morgan Smith is vocally polished...

Gramophone

Carmen, Vancouver Opera

September 2014

Morgan Smith's Escamillo (the matador) superbly delivered machismo with every cell of his body, especially the famous "Toreador" song, which he sang like a proud cockerel (also, his spoken French made everyone else by contrast sound like they were speaking Air Canada French).

Jason Hall, Vancouver Observer

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The Passenger, Houston Grand Opera - Lincoln Center Festival

July 2014

The cast is flawless. The baritone Morgan Smith is the heroic Tadeusz, Marta's fiancé. For the scene in which they discover that they are both at the camp, and alive, Weinberg provides music of pungent longing and subdued ardor.

Anthony Tommasini, The New York Times

Smith carried the strength and determination of Tadeusz with confident ease, and the power of his voice expressed the character's defiance.

George Grella, New York Classical Review

The opera was strongly cast. As Marta's fiancé Tadeusz, baritone Morgan Smith shares some of the opera's most heartfelt music with a resonant voice and thoughtful portrayal.

Richard Sasanow, Broadway World

Sung ardently by Morgan Smith, Tadeusz comes across as a man of pure integrity.

Ronni Reich, New Jersey Online

Silent Night, Fort Worth Opera

May 2014

Smith nearly brought down the house as French Lieutenant Audebert in his Act I aria before the gorgeous "Sleep" chorus.

David Weuste, Opera Pulse

Die Tote Stadt, Dallas Opera

March 2014

Morgan Smith all but steals Act 2 as an actor-friend of Marie.

Arnold Wayne Jones, Dallas Voice

The scene also happened to feature some of the best performances of the night, featuring baritone, Morgan Smith, who absolutely stole the show with Pierrot's Lied in the role of Fritz.

David Weuste, Opera Pulse

Morgan Smith's Fritz brought thick tone to the opera's second great aria.

Scott Cantrell, Opera Magazine

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The Passenger, Houston Grand Opera

January 2014

Morgan Smith, a warm and powerful baritone, likewise stood as a pillar of courage and constancy
Gregory Barnet, Opera News

Morgan Smith has apt baritonal and dramatic depth for the bravely defiant Tadeusz
Scott Cantrell, Dallas News

The baritone Morgan Smith sang strongly as Marta's fiancé Tadeusz, whose proud defiance of camp authority dooms him to the gas chamber.

William Albright, Opera Magazine

Moby Dick DVD San Francisco Opera live recording

November 2013

Starbuck is exceedingly well executed by Morgan Smith. Smith's altercation with Hunter Morris will leave one breathless.

Christie Grimstad, ConcertoNet

Morgan Smith is the sturdy first mate Starbuck, with a baritone to match.

Scott Cantrell, Dallas News

Mourning Becomes Electra, Florida Grand Opera

November 2013

Morgan Smith was a vocal standout as the sea captain Adam Brant, with whom Christine (and possibly Lavinia), is in love. Smith's terrific second-act aria, with ship's rigging in the background, about giving up the sea and his bewilderment at his predicament was a highlight of the evening.

David Fleshler, South Florida Classical Review

Morgan Smith brought a richly textured baritone and some sympathy to Adam.

Heidi Waleson, The Wall Street Journal

Especially interesting is Morgan Smith making a rather sympathetic bad guy. His diction is particularly clear and this handsome man makes his love and lust for the older Christine absolutely believable in spite of his other motivations.

Jeff Haller, Concertonet

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In the male roles, baritone Morgan Smith, as Adam Brant, offered a creamy voice that sounded youthful and passionate, well-suited for this role. In his *Too weak to kill the man I hate*, which in this production opened Act II, and in *You gave the gift of love*, the tenor-like qualities of his instrument were most appealing.

Palm Beach Arts Paper

Baritone Morgan Smith as Adam Brant has a beautiful voice and was given the opportunity to sing the best aria in the production, "Too weak to kill the man I hate." His voice, coupled with his extreme good looks, made him the perfect lover/villain for the piece.

Jack Gardner, Edge Boston

Moby-Dick, San Francisco Opera

October 2012

Morgan Smith was simply terrific as the first mate, Starbuck. [...] Smith brought dramatic authority to the conflicted Christian first mate and sang with a burnished baritone and stern power while also bringing a nostalgic yearning to his moments of homesickness for his wife and family.

Lawrence A. Johnson, The Classical Review

American baritone Morgan Smith makes a welcome return to the SFO as Starbuck, singing with power and conviction as the crewman who comes to admire his captain despite his alarming personal demons.

Philip Campbell, The Bay Area Reporter

The real star of the cast was baritone Morgan Smith, whose Starbuck joined vocal splendor, moral authority and deep empathy in a phenomenal combination.

Joshua Kosman, SFGate

One sets a tender conversation between Greenhorn and Starbuck, the principled first mate, who becomes lost in a reverie, recalling his wife Mary and young son back in Nantucket. Baritone Morgan Smith, as Starbuck, has a strapping voice, sturdy as a mahogany beam, but here he sings with lovely, cooing sweetness.

Richard Scheinin, Mercury News