
Dane Lam

Conductor

Bellini *Norma*, Chelsea Opera Group, Cadogan Hall (October 2018)

"...the combined male forces made a vigorous and wholesome sound, and the full Chorus essayed a stirring War Hymn, invigorated by the relaxed and encouraging gestures of their conductor, Dane Lam. I was impressed by the fluid drama that Lam crafted; accelerations and changes of tempo were clearly and deftly indicated by the left-hander, and if the Orchestra of Chelsea Opera Group didn't always follow his precise commands instantly, then Lam was untroubled and simply worked effectively to wind them up to the mark he had set. He conjured a true sense of grandeur and tragic intensity at the musical and dramatic climaxes, as well as tenderness in the intimate moments. His efforts were rewarded with solid orchestral playing"

- Claire Seymour, *Opera Today*

"...this *Norma* was far from a one-woman show. This became clear in the overture, as Dane Lam set the scene for a gripping drama without denying Bellini his characteristic elegance and flexibility. In the opera itself, it was notable how Lam skillfully wound up the tension through the course of the first *Norma-Adalgisa* duet and partnered closely with Dix in 'Dormono entrami'; after the build-up of nervous energy in the cello passage that preceded it, *Norma's* cry of 'Ah! No! Son figli miei!' really did come as a release."

- Yehuda Shapiro, *Opera Magazine*

"Dane Lam conducted a generally fleet and forthright account yet was extraordinarily responsive to his singers, making sense of Bellini's occasionally sudden and potentially jarring changes of style."

- Alexander Campbell, *Classical Source*

Mozart *Così fan Tutte*, Opera Holland Park (May-June 2018)

"What makes for a memorable summer evening is the uniform vocal strength of the cast, and the lithe rhythmically alert playing of the City of London Sinfonia under Dane Lam. He maintains a tight hold but with the flexibility to support the soloists in their demanding arias and ensembles."

- John Johnston, *BachTrack*

"Dane Lam's tempi began on the quick side, never unreasonably so, yet indicative of an approach one might too readily have taken to be partial. For, as the drama progressed, as the characters achieved greater delineation, so did temporal differentiation. Lam's was a reading that knew where it was going, and thus could afford to take time on the way – in, for instance, a heartrending 'Un aura amoroso'."

- Mark Berry, *Opera Today*

"Brisk and sharp, Dane Lam's conducting steered the City of London Sinfonia away from the romantic yearning that can smother some performances. He grasps that Mozart layers this uniquely bittersweet sound-world – how does he do it? – with so much pathos, melancholy, anguish even, that it needs no bossy over-emphasis."

- Boyd Tonkin, *The Arts Desk*

"Dane Lam conducted a confident and well-balanced reading of the opera. Hugely supportive of his singers – and allowing them some discreet decorations – he drew polished playing from the City of London Sinfonia, especially the all-important woodwind, which provides so much flavor in this score."

- Francis Muzzu, *Opera Now*

"Equally impressive is the playing of the City of London Sinfonia – having a great season thus far – under Dane Lam, whose way with Mozart is unerringly sound and who encourages the cast to indulge in some delicious vocal decoration."

- George Hall, *The Stage*

"Lam, one of two talented new generation conductors to whom OHP has entrusted its early-season offerings (La traviata's Matthew Kofi Waldren is the other) brings spark and sparkle to his beautifully shaped account...his handling of Mozart's elaborate first-act finale was thrilling. He and Eleanor Dennis, in glorious voice, ensured that "Come scoglio", Fiordiligi's aching aria of constancy, was the evening's high point."

- Mark Valencia. *What's on Stage*

"Of course, Mozart's music is top-notch and continues to enthrall and dazzle. Dane Lam and the City of London Sinfonia

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present this with crisp textures and vital playing and tempos."

-Alexander Campbell, *Classical Source*****

"In the pit, Dane Lam encouraged the City of London Sinfonia's litheness of sound, with lively speeds and a sense of purpose. He kept this lively pulse throughout the opera, though never veering into the hard driven and I enjoyed the way he kept the music flowing, with some lovely individual instrumental moments from the orchestra. The comic ensembles really fizzed, whilst the serious elements had great poignancy."

-Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*****

"By the time we have added in Dane Lam's intricate conducting of the City of London Sinfonia, it is clear that Opera Holland Park, following hot on the heels of its success with *La traviata*, has another hit on its hands."

-Sam Smith, *MusicOMH*****

Handel *Giulio Cesare*, Bury Court Opera (March 2018)

"...musically it's remarkable, cast from strength and conducted by Eldridge's compatriot Dane Lam with dynamic elegance. His orchestra, the Camerata Alma Viva, is a crack 21-strong multi-national band; between them they coloured Handel's rich score with verve, imagination and confident aplomb."

-Mark Valencia, *What's on Stage*****

"The Camerata Alma Viva conducted by the brilliant Dane Lam provided the perfect musical backdrop for the action and there were moments of solo stardom for violin and harpsichord that added significantly to the evening's pleasure."

-Owen Davies, *PlaysToSee*****

"the excellent Camerata Alma Viva conducted by Dane Lam"

-Sam Smith, *MusicOMH*****

Verdi *La Traviata*, Scottish Opera (November 2017)

"If the staging tells the story well then so, too, do Scottish Opera's orchestra, on fantastic form tonight for conductor Dane Lam. The divided strings sounded clean as well as desperately poignant in the two preludes, but the party scenes crackled with life, and the instrumental solos were all exceptionally well-taken."

-Simon Thompson, *Seen & Heard International*

Mozart *Don Giovanni*, Opera Holland Park (June 2017)

"Dane Lam leads a very fleet account of the score, full of light and shade, with a beguiling propulsive quality about it; and there were many moments where the transitions between the orchestra and Stuart Wild's admirable continuo (on piano) were seamless. The arrival of Zerlina and Masetto and their friends had a very jolly lilt to it and instrumentalists were given their moment to shine. The more-dramatic episodes also got their full due."

-Alexander Campbell, *Classical Source*****

"It is hard for any creative team to approach such a central work as *Don Giovanni* and make it their own. Director Oliver Platt and Australian conductor Dane Lam, supported by a fine cast, aim for freshness and originality without betraying the demands of the libretto and score of this much-loved piece..."

Lam, who appeared last year at Opera Holland Park conducting Rossini's *Cenerentola*, once again demonstrated a great deal of musical panache. Like many in the audience, I have heard countless performances of *Don Giovanni* so the bar was set high. Lam is highly skilled as a conductor who understands the limitation of short rehearsal times and the often difficult acoustics at Holland Park. The City of London Sinfonia obviously enjoy working with him and respond eagerly to his musical direction. There may have been the odd tempo here and there that I disagreed with, but Lam gives an excellent interpretation of the score and is entirely at home with the demands of a Mozart opera. He is sensitive to his singers' needs and every change of tone and mood in the score. I hope it is not long before audiences at Opera Holland Park get to see him again."

-Howard Shepherdson, *Limelight Magazine*****

"Dane Lam and the City of London Sinfonia were firing on all cylinders throughout the performance. I was struck by the cleanness of the entries in the Overture and the tempi seemed spot on. Lam was highly attentive to texture and balance

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throughout and he was highly flexible and responsive to the needs of the singers. The instrumental entries sounded fresh and the timbres were constantly shifting to reflect the wide panoply of emotions in this opera."

-Robert Beattie, *Seen and Heard International*

Rossini *La Cenerentola*, Opera Holland Park (July-September 2016)

"The musical performance was a cut above OHP's usual standard in Rossini, thanks to Dane Lam's spirited conducting. He was able to get the kind of precision in the complex ensembles that one expects of a top Italian maestro in this repertoire...Thanks to Lam's witty and precise conducting, the ensembles went with an authentically madcap Rossinian zing."

-Hugh Canning, *Opera Magazine*

"Director and designers are superbly partnered by conductor Dane Lam, who exhibits an intuitive feeling for the Rossinian idiom matched by a confident baton technique. Though Rossini and his librettist Jacopo Ferretti cannot avoid some musical and dramatic longeurs as they go through the dramma giocoso motions, Lam keeps the musical momentum swinging. The Rossinian accelerandos are perfectly geared up, the crescendos expertly flared. The left-handed Lam's confidence gave punch and brilliance to the score and he was well-served by his woodwind players who bubbled along with a sensitive ear open to what was going on behind them. All the details were pin-pointed, but there was never any hint of fussiness, or bombast."

-Claire Seymour, *Opera Today*

'As ringleader in the OHP big top, Dane Lam was endlessly energetic and uncompromising on rhythmic detail.'

-Flora Willson, *The Guardian*****

"Playing from the City of London Sinfonia under Dane Lam fulfilled the three Ps of good Rossini comedy: pert, perky and playful."

-Dominic Lowe, *BachTrack*****

"Dane Lam led the City of London Sinfonia in a lively account of the score, eschewing an over-romantic rendition in favour of a leaner, commendably precise reading."

-Alexander Campbell, *Classical Source*****

"As with comedy and farce in theatre, real skill and timing are required. The score for *Cenerentola* is no push over with its hectic speeds, complex ensembles and coloratura show pieces. Australian conductor Dane Lam sails through them all with aplomb, achieving high standards of musicianship from the City of London Sinfonia, Opera Holland Park "

-Howard Shepherdson, *Limelight Magazine*****

"And bringing all this together with a careful eye for the singers was Dane Lam, who conducted with a splendidly light touch."

-Mark Ronan, *Mark Ronan.com*

"The City of London Sinfonia gives an inspired performance under the young Australian conductor Dane Lam."

-Clare Colvin, *The Express*****

"The young Australian Dane Lam's conducting is precise and spirited, encouraging the company's lively chorus to give of their best and the City of London Sinfonia to convey Rossini's score with clarity and focus."

-George Hall, *The Stage*****

"With a City of London Sinfonia on top form, the youthful conductor Dane Lam takes no prisoners with his brisk tempo choices. He puts Rossini first, quite rightly, and from the sparkling overture onwards the evening fizzes by."

-Mark Valencia, *What'sOnStage*****