

---

# Helen Charlston

## Selected Reviews

---

### **Eccles Semele (Juno), Cambridge Handel Opera Company (November 2019)**

"All the vocal soloists were excellent... The mezzo-soprano Helen Charlston did full justice to the role of the furious Juno, full of spiteful passion, her coloratura passages proving her to be the real prima donna here."

- **Sandra Bowdler, Opera Magazine**

### **An Elizabethan Christmas, Fretwork, Wigmore Hall (December 2019)**

"Out of the orient crystal skies' saw Helen Charlston, replacing a previously advertised Elin Manahan Thomas, reveal a clear voice that glistened, with its obvious strength never generating too thick a sound. The lines of the piece seemed so smooth that it felt rather more modern than it actually is, although the final utterance of 'falantidingdido' grounded it very much in its time. In 'From Virgin's womb' of 1589, with words by Francis Kindlemarsh, the line through the word 'Rejoice' very much came to the fore, while 'Lullaby' of 1588 really showed off Charlston's credentials as a mezzo-soprano. ... For sheer beauty the highlight may well have been Charlston's performance of the anonymous 'Sweet was the song'..."

- **Sam Smith, MusicOMH**

### **Handel Venceslao (Lucinda), Opera Settecento, London Handel Festival (April 2019)**

"As a poised Lucinda, Helen Charlston's distinctive mezzo stood out"

- **Rebecca Franks, The Times**

"Helen Charlston as Lucinda revealed a mezzo-soprano whose fullness was complemented by a pleasing edge."

- **Sam Smith, MusicOMH**

"Helen Charlston expressed steadiness and determination that helped, at least at the musical level, to make sense of her motivations."

- **Curtis Rogers, Classical Source**

### **Bach St John Passion, Polyphony, OAE, St John's Smith Square (April 2019)**

"Helen Charlston has a remarkable technique and dignified presence, and her singing of 'Von den Stricken meiner Sünden' gave a fine example of both"

- **Melanie Eskenazi, MusicOMH**

### **Bach Cantatas Nos 106 & 182, Amici Voices, CDA68275 (February 2019)**

"The highlight is Helen Charlston's mesmerising delivery of 'Leget Euch'... lovingly accompanied by the flautist Ashley Solomon."

- **Jonathan Freeman Attwood, Gramophone**

---

# Helen Charlston

## Selected Reviews

---

### **'Venus Unwrapped'; Strozzi & Monteverdi, OAE, Kings Place (January 2019)**

"Helen Charlston's rich, solid, sensuous contralto, and David Shipley's fantastically sonorous basso profundo stood out. Particularly enjoyable was *Le tre Gratie a Venere*, which featured Allen, Charlston and Zoe Brookshaw in a trio that followed the classic early-baroque model of nimble, pinging phrases that, after abrupt cessation, moved into prolonged, winding suspension-filled cadences."

- Barry Creasy, *MusicOMH*

### **Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra (October 2018)**

"For her part, Charlston was able to bring a surprising amount of vocal richness to the remarkable series of arias in the second half. She was also suitably haunting in "Erbarme dich" and displayed soul-wrenching phrasing in a particularly intense "Können Tränen"."

- Simon Holden, *Bachtrack*

### **Bach *Mass in B minor*, Tilford Bach Society & The London Handel Orchestra St John's Smith Square (June 2018)**

"Helen Charlston, though, was the star of the show... like the best of desserts, her voice is creamy with a hint of sharp fruitiness, and it was with her solo 'Agnus Dei' towards the end of the musical feast, that she wowed the audience."

- Barry Creasy, *musicOMH*

### **Bach *Weihnachts-Oratorium*, St John's Smith Square Christmas Festival (December 2017)**

"Helen Charlston was an exceptional interpreter; the gentle smile with which she intoned 'Schlafe, mein Liebster, (Sleep, my beloved)' was especially moving."

- Mark Valencia, *Classical Source*

### **Telemann 250th Anniversary, Florilegium, Wigmore Hall (June 2017)**

"The clear highlight of the concert was the Epiphany Cantata *Ihr Völker hört*, which found Helen Charlston on top form, her diction clarion clear, her ability to cope with Telemann's florid writing never in doubt."

- Colin Clarke, *Seen and Heard International*

"Mezzo-soprano Helen Charlston, despite being a last-minute substitute, used her glinting tone to demonstrate the remarkable expressiveness of Telemann's recitatives."

- John Allison, *The Telegraph*

---

# Helen Charlston

## Selected Reviews

---

### **Handel *Jephtha* (Storgè), Academy of Ancient Music, London Festival of Baroque Music (May 2017)**

"Charlston's Storgè moved finely from the beautifully shaped expressiveness of her opening aria, through great strength of feeling in 'Scenes of horror' to her vibrant reaction to the events of Act Two. Throughout Charlston showed an ability to combined vividness of expression with musicality, using her dark-hued voice to great effect."

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

### **Bach *B minor Mass*, St John's Smith Square Christmas Festival (December 2016)**

"Though she had the lightest challenge, the Mezzo-Soprano Helen Charlston stood out on account of her warmly distinctive tone."

**- John Allison, *The Telegraph***

### **Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Amici Voices (March 2015)**

"Mezzo soprano Helen Charlston deserves special mention. Her solos... displayed those qualities of her voice which have helped firmly establish Charlston on the professional scene."

**- Ingrid Pearson, *Early Music Review***

### **Esenvalds *Northern Lights & other choral works*, Trinity College Choir Cambridge, CDA68083 (February 2015)**

"Trinity have a rather special mezzo, Helen Charlston, and her lovely singing tips the balance for me."

**- John Quinn, *Music Web International***