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# Phillip Rhodes

## Selected Reviews

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### **Andrea Chénier, Opera North (March 2016)**

"in a large cast, there were notable contributions from Phillip Rhodes as Chénier's friend Roucher." – **Anthony Arblaster, Opera Now March**

"Phillip Rhodes is a sonorous Roucher." – **Tom Sutcliffe, Opernwelt March**

"Giordano's score contains such a Wagnerian range of colour and catchiness that it could have done with even more idiomatic despatch from the maestro. But his care brought every role into solid play – both Phillip Rhodes's resonant, affectionate Roucher and Daniel Norman's authoritative Abbé." – **Tom Sutcliffe, The Critic's Circle**

### **Tosca, New Zealand Opera (September 2015)**

"As Scarpia, Phillip Rhodes has just the right power and charisma to catch the character's unredeemed villainy. Far from the wiggled and corpulent old lecher you might have had, decades ago, in a period production, the New Zealand baritone is lean and sexy, a Mafioso wolf prowling for prey in Maunder's post-Mussolini Italy. Rhodes' voice soars above the strong-voiced chorus in Act I's Te Deum, and yet he can be snake-like and subtle, laying out his personal credo of evil." – **William Dart, NZ Herald**

"It would have been easy for Rhodes' Scarpia to be overshadowed by all this Wagnerian-scale singing from the romantic leads but he more than held his own through a combination of rich baritone vocalism and a sense of barely restrained violence. His rather elegant stage deportment matches well with his suavity of tone, making Scarpia legitimately attractive in his dealings with Tosca. This elegance makes his sudden ferocious outbursts of anger, both vocal and physical, all the more shocking – a much more interesting portrayal than your usual venal tyrant. His voice also has enough richness to make himself the centre of the busy Te Deum scene, even with the hefty dose of incense." – **Simon Holden, Bachtrack,**

"As it turned out the most intriguing performance on stage was that of Rhodes as Scarpia. His youthful looks were far removed from the sleazy, brutish character that we often see, presenting rather a virile, masculine villain that in a different situation might have had little difficulty in seducing Tosca. (...) His virile baritone voice was sumptuous in texture, riding the orchestral and choral waves in the 'Te Deum' at the end of Act 1, matching Tosca's outbursts in Act 2 note for note, and dominating every scene he was in as any good Scarpia should." – **Michael Sinclair, The Opera Critic**

"Phillip Rhodes's performance as Baron Scarpia is excellent, brimming with malice and a thug-like authoritative control. He has a wonderful voice and was an excellent casting choice, able to stand alongside the powerful O'Neill. His portrayal perfectly captures that dark quality of corrupted people in power at the top, who can outwardly keep a calm and almost civilised manner, whilst simultaneously being the most ruthless and inhumane monsters imaginable." – **Sam Jury, Broadway World**

"Phillip Rhodes' Baron Scarpia is vocally menacing, particularly in the Te Deum." – **Takeshi Ito, Stuff**

"Rhodes, who has achieved recognition on the international opera stage, is brilliant in the part of the fanatically evil Scarpia, delivering the part with aplomb, in the nastiest possible way." – **Marianne Kelly, Time Live**

"The romantic, freethinking artist Cavaradossi (Simon O'Neill) and the sleazy, greasy Scarpia (Phillip Rhodes) were convincing in their tragic ideals, with the latter's dark looks perfect for his mafia-infused role." – **Antonina Elliott, National Business Review**

"Phillip Rhodes, as the dark voiced villain Baron Scarpia, is right there with him vocally. The colours and power that he produces, his characterisation and concentration shows a fine operatic performer on the way up." – **Penny Dodd, Theatre Review**

"As in any tragedy, love must be met with a destructive force. New Zealand's own Phillip Rhodes takes on the dastardly Baron Scarpia, enforcer of the law with an iron fist and his band of lackeys. Rhodes relishes in the performance, giving life to the conniving Scarpia as he entertainingly plans to ignite Tosca's jealousy and tear the lovers apart. Supported by the Kiri Te

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Kanawa Foundation, Rhodes is absolutely one to watch." – **Emma Keesing, Concrete Playground**

"The villainous Baron Scarpia, played by Phillip Rhodes, embodies the manipulation and strength of this evil man who looks so suave he could've stepped out of Goodfellas or The Godfather. He's a wonderful performer whose voice adds the right level of perilous gravitas the story needs." – **Ingrid Grenar, Keeping up with New Zealand**

"As the Baron Scarpia, Rhodes, while maybe more elegant than evil, nevertheless has a rich and full baritone voice that gives the character great authority." – **Ewen Coleman, The Dominion Post**

"While Phillip Rhodes, another New Zealander making his mark on the international scene, injected his portrayal of Scarpia with a wonderful pervading menace." – **Manawatu Standard**

"As an elegantly dressed Scarpia, Rhodes' rich baritone voice has the menace of a Mafia Don determined to have Tosca. His is a cold passion, which conveys he will have his way and that words are only words." – **Mary Bryan, Wanganui Chronicle**

### **Sweeney Todd, Victorian Opera (July 2015)**

"Phillip Rhodes gave Judge Turpin undeviating polish." – **Paul Selar, Herald Sun**

### **Lucia di Lammermoor, Auckland Opera Studio (October 2014)**

"Phillip Rhodes, as Enrico, dealt out testosterone thrust with immaculate bel canto credentials..." – **William Dart, New Zealand Herald**

"Phillip Rhodes has experience in the role of Lucia's brother, Enrico, and it showed with his complex portrait of the character....Vocally, things were tip-top too as he filled the theatre with his ample baritone, full and rich from the bottom range to his thrilling high notes but with a subtle ear for dynamics." – **Simon Holden, Bachtrack**

"Phillip Rhodes, the Maori baritone singing Enrico, has a wonderfully dark voice, clear articulation and impressive stage presence (as audiences in Leeds and at Dorset Opera will know)." – **Nicholas Tarling, Opera**

### **La Boheme, Opera North (April 2014)**

"As Marcello, New Zealand baritone Phillip Rhodes has a nonchalant authority to go with his rock-solid technique." – **Ron Simpson, Whatsonstage.com**

"Phillip Rhodes plays a virile Marcello" – **Alfred Hickling, The Guardian**

"Phillip Rhodes's warm-toned Marcello." – **Martin Dreyer, The Press**

"Phillip Rhodes was a warm-voiced, reliable Marcello." – **Opera Magazine**

### **Dido & Aeneas, Opera North (Feb 2013)**

"Collins can't resist dropping the slightly heavy-handed hint that Phillip Rhodes's severe-sounding Aeneas may be the same bounder who hangs up on Poulenc's Elle, though in this instance his behaviour is even more reprehensible: he doesn't even ring." – **Alfred Hickling, The Guardian**

"Phillip Rhodes's firm baritone just keeps Aeneas from becoming the usual wimp." – **Martin Dreyer, The Press**

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"The role of Aeneas settles easily within the range of the young New Zealand baritone Phillip Rhodes, dressed in the uniform of a naval commander. His dark coloured voice possesses an attractive rugged quality - an ideal vocal match for Helen Stephen's Dido. A pity that Purcell does not give Aeneas more to do." – **Antony Lias, *Opera Britannia***

"Phillip Rhodes, appearing for the first time with Opera North, brings a powerful presence to Aeneas, coming into his own with "Yours be the blame, ye gods!" – **Richard Wilcocks, *Bachtrack***

### **Tosca, Dorset Opera (July 2011)**

"Swarthy Phillip Rhodes was a bit on the young side for Scarpia but is sure to mature into the role and become a formidable interpreter." – **Simon Thomas, *WhatsOnStage***

"The ghastly Scarpia was delivered with aristocratic relish and silky disdain by Phillip Rhodes, completing a stylish trio. – **Michael Tanner, *The Spectator***

### **Turandot, New Zealand Opera (September 2007)**

"Phillip Rhodes (Ping), Adrian McEniery (Pang) and Benjamin Fifita Makisi (Pong) are perfectly cast and their ensemble work is hugely watchable. The stand out is Rhodes, whose vocal command and charisma fills the stage and auditorium effortlessly." – **Kate Ward-Smythe, *Theatre Review***