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# Sam Furness

## Selected Reviews

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### **Title role of Offenbach *Les contes d'Hoffman*, English Touring Opera, cond. Philip Sunderland, dir. James Bonas (October 2015)**

"Furness, however, is terrific in the immensely difficult title role. Gauchely attractive, he charts Hoffmann's descent from naive idealism to self-destructive despair with compelling veracity, and sings it all with great ease and impeccable style... it's Furness's night." - *Guardian*

"Sam Furness's tenor as Hoffmann ... sounds almost too seductive for a serial romantic failure. This is a voice with star quality, and Furness can float it delicately over a final chord as readily as he can send it slamming to the back of the hall." - *The Arts Desk*

"The ubiquitous Hoffmann (strongly sung and flamboyantly acted by Sam Furness) is no longer a poet deserted by inspiration but a silent movie director who is equally washed up." - *Times*

"The singing is of exceptional quality. Sam Furness flings himself with total commitment into Hoffmann's torment – it's refreshing to hear a British tenor let rip with such full-throated ardour and he plays the part of the hopeless unshaven wastrel to the hilt." - *Telegraph*

""There was no doubting the passion and promise of Sam Furness' blond-mopped Hoffmann." - *Opera*

"The screening of this 'lesson in love' is overseen by Sam Furness's jaded and disillusioned Hoffmann, a slumped figure of dejection, pathos blending with mundanity - a former Romantic hero now reduced to an idler blowing smoke rings. Furness was tireless in the title role and blended an ethereally beautiful head voice with focused lyrical power and rich warmth. Furness also showed good sense in pacing himself and ensuring that he had the stamina to sustain the lyrical intensity; indeed, he began strongly, but held enough in reserve to offer some thrillingly impassioned singing in the Antonia and Giulietta Acts. He was utterly convincing as the somewhat shabby poet-turned-filmmaker." - *Opera Today*

"The cast were on fine form... Sam Furness has a lyrical tenor voice and he did a great job with Kleinzach's aria in the prologue which he sang with tongue in cheek heroic gusto... he delivered well in the incendiary scenes in the Antonia and Giulietta Acts where he gave us some thrilling singing and a ravishing beauty of tone." - *Seen and Heard International*

"Offenbach's Hoffmann is a drunkard, a dreamer, a seducer and a murderer. Played with gusto by tenor Sam Furness, we first see him in the depths of drink, goaded, unsuccessfully by his Muse (mezzo soprano Louise Mott) into producing his next work of genius." - *Big Issue*

"No such problem with the lyrical singing of Sam Furness, who made a beautifully convincing Hoffmann, poet and visionary rescued from his own excesses..." - *Mark Ronan*

"Sam Furness in transcendent form.... is lyrical, fearless and tireless in the title role." – *WhatsOnStage*

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"Rising star tenor Sam Furness brings burnished and varied tone to his self-destructive Hoffmann." - *Stage*

"Sam Furness is excellent as Hoffmann, producing a strong and expansive tenor sound." - *MusicOMH*

### **Baron Lummer in Strauss *Intermezzo*, Garsington Opera, cond. Jac van Steen, dir. Bruno Ravella (June 2015)**

"Sam Furness turns in a fine performance as a shameless, perpetually grinning Baron Lummer"  
- *Financial Times*

"Sam Furness, as the dashing Baron Lummer with whom Christine is supposed to be entangled, delivered a wonderfully detailed portrait of caddish, wheedling opportunism" - *Classical Source*

"Other supporting roles are flawlessly taken. Sam Furness does a perfect comedy turn as the not very bright young fop Baron Lummer" - *Arts Desk*

"Sam Furness is a splendidly laconic Baron Lummer." - *Music OMH*

"Sam Furness's Baron... [is] excellently shambolic" - *Times*

"Sam Furness brings some much-needed comic relief as spivvy Baron Lummer" - *Observer*

"Sam Furness's Baron Lummer offered a well-judged mixture of vocal allure and immaturity of character."  
- *Opera Today*

### **Števa in Janáček *Jenůfa*, Scottish Opera, cond. Stuart Stratford, dir. Annilese Miskimmon (April 2015)**

"Sam Furness is a wonderfully slippery Števa." - *Bachtrack*

"Sam Furness's recklessly immature Števa [is] all too credible." - *Guardian*

### **Joe in Puccini *The Girl of the Golden West*, English National Opera, cond. Keri-Lynn Wilson, dir. Richard Jones (September 2014)**

"... young lyric tenor Sam Furness's voice gleaming occasionally through the textures" - *Arts Desk*

### **Jaquino *Fidelio*, Garsington Opera, cond. Douglas Boyd, dir. John Cox (June 2014)**

"For me there were two standout performances. Jennifer France, and especially Sam Furness, in the usually boring roles of Marzeline and Jaquino, acted and sang impeccably and in such a way as to make you care about characters most productions scarcely bother with." - *Arts Journal*

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"Making more than is on the page of the somewhat inconsequential Jaquino was Sam Furness, very much the handsome chap who wants his girl." - *Classical Source*

### **Lensky in Tchaikovsky *Eugene Onegin*, Royal Academy of Music, cond. Jane Glover, dir. John Ramster (March 2013)**

"The vocal honours of the evening went unequivocally to Samuel Furness, whose performance of Lensky's aria before the duel, a piece that can sound maudlin, was so pure in tone, so full of useless regret, that I wonder if I have ever heard it sung so finely in the theatre." - *The Spectator*

"Samuel Furness (Lensky) stood out for his bright, commanding tenor and confident acting." – *Intermezzo*

"...Samuel Furness's Lensky [was] outstanding...with exceptional singing... Furness held on to his top-note farewell with a cheeky persistence that had you gasping. But this was the last night of the run and he could do it, so why not? In a work suffused with poignancy, it was nice to smile." – *Guardian*

### **Title role of *Albert Herring*, Théâtre du Capitole Toulouse, cond. David Syrus (January 2013)**

"From a vocal perspective, the young British tenor is beyond reproach..." - *Pera Magazine*

"In the role of the 'May King'...Sam Furness is perfect. His monologues are delivered with a touching spontaneity... His beautiful tenor voice is moving...as an actor he is excellent." – *ODB*

"The tenor Sam Furness was a remarkable interpreter of Albert Herring. Herring is a character who needs a convincing actor-singer rather than just a brilliant singer and this British tenor lives up to the challenge remarkably well". – *Beckmesser*

"The first ever May King at the Théâtre du Capitole is sung by young Sam Furness. This lyric tenor, who will turn 27 this year, already shows pretty amazing qualities of timbre, evenness throughout his whole vocal range and an innate musicality... my goodness, what great promise". - *Classic Toulouse.com*

"Singing the role of Albert, young British tenor Sam Furness is a revelation. A natural on stage, his Albert is genuine and touching. Here is a singer who knows how to negotiate the pitfalls of the score. Not to be missed." - *Ladépêche.fr*

### **Vašek *The Bartered Bride*, British Youth Opera, cond. Peter Robinson, dir. Rodula Gaitanou (September 2012)**

"Yet even [Kecal] was outshone by the remarkable Vašek of Samuel Furness, a lyric tenor clearly going places... With Gaitanou's help, Furness created one of the most complete, funny and touching impersonations of this tricky role that I have seen." - *Opera Magazine*

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"Sam Furness, a fine tenor who can also act, commanded the stage as the poor, shy, tongue-tied boy who eventually finds his inner grizzly bear by joining a circus." - *The Observer*

"All the principals are singers one would like to hear again. Particularly outstanding [is] Samuel Furness, whose portrayal of the socially maladjusted Vasek — a stuttering victim of maternal oppression who finds his vocation in a circus bearskin — is a tour de force." - *London Evening Standard*

"Samuel Furness's stammering nerd, Vasek [was] pointed and vigorous from the start, though his real blossoming comes in Act III, when this dolt bridegroom advances beyond caricature into a genuinely sympathetic character." - *The Times*

"There was no need to make allowances for tonight's cast. The stuttering, twitching, and completely hilarious Vašek (Samuel Furness)... provided some moments of pure comedic genius." - *Bachtrack.com*

### **Bénédict Béatrice et Bénédict, Royal Academy Opera, cond. Sir Colin Davis, dir. John Copley (November 2011)**

"Samuel Furness made Bénédict the most three-dimensional character ... His tenor is very sweet and lyrical throughout his range, and he was the only singer to produce that typically French, slightly nasal twang in his voice." - *Classical Source*

### **Title role of *Albert Herring*, Shadwell Opera, Opera Holland Park (July 2011)**

"Britten's 1947 opera is an ideal vehicle for the light-voiced Sam Furness, who sang Herring and has all the makings of a star..." - *The Guardian*

"The best performance was Sam Furness's of the title role: his look of perplexed misery at his May King crowning ceremony, dressed in shining white suit, was delightful; and his drunken awakening monologue was well-delivered, managing to be both funny and poignant." - *Classical Source*

### **Odoardo Ariodante, Il Complesso Barocco, cond. Alan Curtis, Barbican (May 2011)**

"Sam Furness sang the small, but important part of Odoardo; a role with no aria, but one which requires the singer to expedite some of the drama in the recitative. Furness was a credit to his training and displayed an attractive, unforced lyric voice." - *Planet Hugill*

"With first-rate support from Sam Furness, this was a feast of bel canto so delicious as to melt the prejudices of even the most hardened Handel opera sceptics." - *The Telegraph*