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# James Oxley

## Selected Reviews

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### ***Evangelist (St John Passion), Northern Sinfonia, The Sage Gateshead (April 2011)***

"James Oxley was a delightful Evangelist, engaging the audience with a real sense of story-telling and clearly relishing the ornamental passages of the recitative." – **Jane Shuttleworth, *Bachtrack***

### ***Evangelist (St John Passion), Dunedin Consort, St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral, Edinburgh (April 2011)***

"...James Oxley [was] an urgent and vocally compelling Evangelist." – **Kate Molleson, *The Guardian***

### ***Bath Philharmonia: An English Christmas Prior Park Chapel, Bath, (December 2010)***

"It was quite beautifully sung by tenor James Oxley, who found all the reflective intensity which gives the piece its emotional power. This was a memorable musical experience which provided a quite different insight into the Christmas story that was profoundly moving." – **Peter Lloyd Williams, *The Bath Chronicle***

### ***Acis (Acis und Galatea), Reinsberg Festival / Martin Haselböck, (July 2010)***

"James Oxley as Acis (...) is musically flawless, confident in style, and displays some stunning acting."  
– **Oliver A. Láng, *Kultur***

### ***Orpheus (Orpheus Projekt), Theater Dortmund, (June 2010)***

"James Oxley mastered the tenor part outstandingly, word perfect and highly expressive with his charmingly beautiful and flexible voice. (...) Oxley performs impressively throughout, with a never-tiring voice and the demanding physical stamina which the role requires." – ***Westfälische Rundschau***

"Oxley has a beautiful, lyrical and high tenor voice (...)" – **Julia Gaß, *Ruhr Nachrichten***

### ***RSNO Messiah, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, (Jan 2010)***

"the control with which tenor James Oxley sung the unaccompanied bars of the opening recitative presaged the beauty of his later solos." – **Carla Whalen, *The Scotsman***

"the lean and intense tenor James Oxley" – **Michael Tumelty, *Herald Scotland***

### ***The Lighthouse, (Maxwell Davies), Buxton Festival, (July 2009)***

"The youthful anguish of James Oxley's high tenor is a good match for Sandy, spinner of erotic romance (...)"  
– **Geoff Brown, *The Times***

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### **Pickaquoy Centre, Kirkwall**

"(...)yet it was perhaps James Oxley's Sandy, a wide-eyed portrayal of innocence corrupted, who was particularly striking."  
– **Rowena Smith, *The Guardian***

### **Manchester, (March 2009)**

"The tenor James Oxley (...) is splendidly at home in his role" – **Paul Driver, *The Times***

### **Cantatas Volume 20 (Bach) Monteverdi Choir / Gardiner, (April 2009)**

"the tenor James Oxley and the violinist Maya Homburger relish a particularly dramatic piece." – **Stephen Pettitt, *The Times***

"The tenor aria that follows, interpreted by a fiery James Oxley (...) – **(May 2009) Marina Romani, *musicalcriticism.com***

### **Gerontius, (Elgar) Gloucester Choral Society, Rochester Cathedral (April 2006)**

"Inevitably any performance of Gerontius stands or falls chiefly by the quality of the soloists. Fortunately the soloists for this performance had been chosen with great care and all were on top form. The Gerontius, James Oxley, has, happily, become something of a regular at concerts in this part of the world but on this occasion he surpassed all the previous excellent performances that I've heard him give. Elgar made very great demands on his tenor soloist in writing the role of Gerontius. On the one hand the singer needs an heroic, almost heldentenor, strength for the Big Moments such as 'Sanctus Fortis' in Part One or 'Take me away' towards the end of Part Two. However, the same singer needs to be able to sing many extended passages, especially in Part Two, with the sensitivity and intimacy of a lieder singer. I thought Oxley met both challenges superbly. His is a relatively light voice but there's no lack of steel and power when that's required. Throughout the whole evening his delivery was consistently easy and clear. Above the stave Oxley seemed to sing quite effortlessly, right up to and including the top B flat at 'In Thine own agony'. Though he was required to project into a very large building there was never the slightest suspicion of forced tone and yet he had no difficulty in riding Elgar's large orchestra. But besides sheer technical excellence, he brought great intelligence and understanding to the music. He made every word tell and his singing always had great commitment. 'Sanctus Fortis' was, as it should be, a highpoint. Here Oxley combined manly strength with the requisite amount of vulnerability. The dialogue with The Angel in Part Two was especially satisfying. On the evidence of this performance I'd suggest that James Oxley has it in him to become the outstanding exponent of this role in his generation (record companies, please take note!) and I'm very glad indeed to have heard him as Gerontius." – **John Quinn, *MusicWeb***,

### **Ballad of Heroes (Britten), Crouch End Festival Chorus / David Temple, Barbican (January 2006)**

James Oxley offered an affecting lyric tenor voice in a rather unrewarding role." – **Keith Potter, *The Independent***

"...doux et émotif Ferrando à qui peut être reviendrait ce soir la palme de l'interprétation toutes disciplines confondues. James Oxley nous a, en effet, servi un Ferrando aux émotions variables, dans un personnage constant et attachant."  
– **Cyril Brun, *Resmusica***

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"To put it simply this was outstanding. Tenor James Oxley and French horn player Ben Jacks brought focus and eloquence to a work which endures as one of the finest musical settings of poetic texts ever written. Oxley's delivery was stark, direct, precise and lyrical, bringing to the six historically diverse texts an insistent expressive clarity. He had the rounded lyricism of a tenor and the rhetorical poise of an actor." - **Peter McCallum, *Sydney Morning Herald***

"James Oxley is an impeccable musician, comparable vocally to Ian Bostridge" - **Renaud Marchart, *Le Monde***

"James Oxley had the right timbre for the distinctive role of Mercury" - **Michael Kennedy, *Sunday Telegraph***

"Opera-goers weaned on Wagner and Verdi traditionally detect a hint of the vegetarian in early music performances, but there was nothing bloodless about James Oxley's warmly phrased Actéon..." - **Rodney Milnes, *The Times***

"Oxley's voice was revealed as one of unusual flexibility and mellowness throughout the range...The prancing buoyant nature of the writing was beautifully conveyed by Oxley's tenor...It was a pleasure to hear both Oxley and Poulsen perform immaculately from memory." - **Neville Cohn, *The West Australian***

"A special pleasure was the performance of Britten's Serenade...James Oxley [was] strong in enunciation and agile in technique." - **Roger Covell, *The Sunday Morning Herald***

"The highlight of the concert, however, was Britten's Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings of 1943...It is difficult to dissociate this work from the original recordings with tenor Peter Pears, yet this concert's interpretation had an individuality and sincerity that was totally convincing." - **Johanna Selleck, *Herald Sun***

"A true Brittenesque tenor, his execution was perfectly pitched, operatic in interpretation and bursting with contrasts...By employing his own character to full effect, Oxley painted an accurate portrait of a deeply sensual composer."

- **Elizabeth Clark, *The Herald***

"The centrepiece was the reprise of last year's acclaimed Huntington Festival appearances by British tenor James Oxley in Britten's Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings of 1943. Oxley showed off what all the fuss is about, He demonstrated facility and ease across the range of his voice – no mean feat in a piece which attacks most tenors' passagio unmercifully, forcing powerful crescendos and darting agility where a singer is most likely to crack." - **Daniel Fortmann, *Australian Jewish News, 28.08.98***

"[originally written for soprano and strings] the soloist James Oxley proved that it is equally valid for tenor. His voice is rich and fulsome and never wavered in its conviction of the sensuality of Britten's settings of Rimbaud's late 19th century poems. Oxley matched their [the strings] robustness, the lucid performance all the more remarkable for a (false) fire alarm and evacuation of the building." - **Carol Main, *The Scotsman, 13.04.96***