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# Mhairi Lawson

## Selected Reviews

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### **Sir Charles Mackerras Memorial Concert, Royal Festival Hall (November 2010)**

"Mhairi Lawson (replacing an indisposed Rebecca Evans) was as sensitive in 'How beautiful are the feet' from *Messiah* as she was deft in 'Let the bright seraphim' from *Samson*." – **Richard Whitehouse, *Classicalsource.com***

"Lawson, if a little soft-grained, was throughout exactly the kind of musicianly, personable singer Mackerras adored." – **David Nice, *The Arts Desk***

### **Haydn *The Creation*, Gabrieli Consort/McCreesh, Swansea Festival (October 2009)**

"Mhairi Lawson was full of vocal vitality and elegance, the sound of her voice rising above the whole ensemble striking and the intimacy of address in her work as Eve a particular pleasure." – **Glyn Pursglove, *Seen and Heard***

### **Handel *Orlando (Dorinda)*, Opera Theatre Company/Curnyn, Buxton Festival (July 2009)**

"...true Handelian style surfaces in the voice of Mhairi Lawson as the sadly wise nurse Dorinda." – **Hilary Finch, *The Times***

"...lovelorn Dorinda as a nurse, sung and acted excellently by Mhairi Lawson..." – **Robert Farr, *Seen and Heard***

### **Handel *Jephtha*, Gabrieli Consort/McCreesh, Barbican Hall London (June 2009)**

"I'll also remember Jephtha's daughter, Mhairi Lawson's clear-voiced Iphis – light as a fairy in *Tune the soft melodious flute*, touchingly fragile minutes later after accepting her lot as a sacrificial offering." – **Geoff Brown, *The Times***

"Mhairi Lawson (Iphis) is a great communicator, charmingly seductive but also disciplined and tasteful. She told the story with suitable pure voice, lovely tone-colour changes, facial expressions ..." – **Agnes Kory, *Musicalcriticism.com***

### **Handel *Acis and Galatea*, Gabrieli Consort/McCreesh, Wigmore Hall London (February 2009)**

"...a crystal stream of pure, limpid soprano sound..." – **Hugh Canning, *The Sunday Times***

"...hers was the very epitome of sweet English song." – **Hilary Finch, *The Times***

"...Mhairi Lawson and James Gilchrist making an ecstatic pair of lovers..." – **Tim Ashley, *The Guardian***

### **Haydn *The Creation*, Choir of New College Oxford/Higginbottom, OP 008-9 (December 2008)**

"Soprano Mhairi Lawson proves as unfailingly beautiful in tone as she is neat in execution." – **George Hall, *BBC Music Magazine***

"A major asset: Mhairi Lawson has a beautiful voice and excellent artistry." – **George Hall, *BBC Music Magazine***

"The three soloists are excellent, particularly Mhairi Lawson, whose sweet, expressive soprano is full of wonder as Eve." – **Emma Baker, *Classic FM Magazine***

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"Mhairi Lawson's lightish tones sit well with Eve. Her solo passage 'Spouse adored' in the second duet of Adam and Eve is sweetly sung: young love at its freshest." – **John T. Hughes, *Internation Record Review***

### **Purcell *King Arthur*, ENO/Mark Morris Production, New York (March 2008)**

"The star is the bright-voiced, sassy soprano Mhairi Lawson" – ***The New York Times***

"In the Frost Scene, soprano Mhairi Lawson was a bright-voiced, mischievous Cupid" – ***The Wall Street Journal***

"The singers were very game, too, particularly the charming Mhairi Lawson, whose mellifluous soprano rang out in several of the most beautiful numbers, and who seemed quite caught up in the amiable "let's put on a show" flavor of it all."

– ***Dance View Times***

"Soprano Mhairi Lawson, making her City Opera debut, was especially good in the Frost Scene" – ***The New York Sun***

"The crystalline soprano Mhairi Lawson plays Cupid, defrosting the place so that love can reign as it should." – ***Bloomberg.com***

### **Handel *Acis and Galatea*, Gabrieli Consort, Cologne (May 2007)**

"Mhairi Lawson's Galatea, always musical and assured ... waited until the death of Acis to reward us with her best singing in her last, moving numbers." – ***Ópera Actual***

### **Antonio Vivaldi: *Virtuoso Impresario: Concertos and Arias from La costanza trionfante and La fida ninfa*, La Serenissima/Chandler, Avie AV 2128 (2007)**

"...tonal warmth and requisite virtuosity. Her intuitive responses to Vivaldi's tenderly expressive writing makes 'Dolce fiamma' especially beguiling....an excellent disc." – ***BBC Music Magazine (five stars)***

"...voice has both power and beauty; her technical skill is evident....expressivity is appealing...and her breath control is superhuman in the coloratura...Stupefying." – ***Classic FM Magazine (five stars)***

"...all fire-breathing coloratura and declamatory extravagance.....considerable technical dexterity...astonishing...in a slow, sexy aria from La Fida Ninfa, sung with such tonal beauty and grace that, for a moment, time seemed to stand still." – ***The Guardian***

"... delivered with piercing dramatic force." – ***The Times (four stars)***

### **Purcell *King Arthur*, ENO/Mark Morris Production, London and Berkeley (2006)**

"...'Fairest Isle' sung here with immense poise by Lawson..." – ***The Independent***

"And the British singers, especially the glorious Lawson, entered so happily into Morris' silliness that you could barely tell them apart from the dancers." – ***The Examiner***

"...lovely cast of bright young soloists...Mhairi Lawson shone in 'Fairest Isle'..." – ***The Telegraph***

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"The work's best-known number, 'Fairest Isle', is delivered beautifully by Mhairi Lawson in a tableau all the more effective for its stillness." – **The Evening Standard**

"...the honours go to Mhairi Lawson, the soprano who also sings the role of Cupid, and sings 'Fairest Isle', and the invocation to Saint George. ...she rebukes the poor Genius of Cold in florid rodomontade and in a series of marvellous poses she moves through with ease and gusto...to pose like Margot Fonteyn in 'Symphonic Variations', front knee bent and foot pointing sideways, with her arms a la lyre. I'd say Lawson must be one of the best dancing singers I've seen since Kiri te Kanawa..."

– **Danceviewtimes.com**

### **Vivaldi *L'amore per Elvira, La Serenissima*/Chandler, Linn Records CKD 281 (2006)**

"...Mhairi Lawson brings ...characteristically bright and powerful tone and a strong sense of drama." – **Gramophone Magazine**

"Mhairi Lawson sings with an intensity that conveys the lover's plight as though he were standing before us."

– **Classic FM Magazine (four stars)**

"...virtuosic rhapsody...Lawson is an attentive swain, animating the recitatives, and investing the arias with a sure sense of line, fluency of ornamentation and acuity of nuance." – **BBC Music Magazine (four stars)**

"Mhairi Lawson sings with an intensity that conveys the lover's plight as though he were standing before us."

– **Classic FM Magazine (four stars)**

"Mhairi Lawson [has] a rich and truly lovely voice, always beautifully controlled and with an almost instrumental quality in its clarity of pitch and articulation - brilliantly demonstrated in the opening of 'Tremori al braccio'."

– **International Record Review**

"...vivid performances from Mhairi Lawson and La Serenissima. She responds to every nuance of the drama and produces a wonderful kaleidoscope of vocal styles and colours to inflect the words and the music. ...no-one can doubt the aplomb with which she sings this music nor the vividness that she brings to the drama.

Lawson is of course a natural stage creature, but whilst these performances are dramatic she stays successfully within the chamber nature of the pieces." – **MusicWebInternational.com**

"...in company with young soprano Mhairi Lawson, whose voice in this repertoire is one to die for. She recreates Vivaldi's cantatas with riveting passion, and the entire disc...is an immensely enjoyable programme, one that you can just sit down and listen to from end to end." – **Manchester Evening News (five stars, Top Ten for 2006)**

### **Composer X *Laudate Pueri, La Serenissima*/Chandler, Avie AV 2106 (2006)**

"...a chance to experience the bright brilliance of soprano, Mhairi Lawson." – **The Gramophone (Editor's Choice)**

### **Vivaldi: *Music for the Chapel of the Pietà, La Serenissima*/Chandler, Avie AV 2063 (2004)**

"New Star: Mhairi Lawson delivers effortless serenity – giving a vivid vocal depiction of sorrowful departure."

– **Classic FM Magazine/Best Buy (five stars)**

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"Mhairi Lawson sings with secure intonation, expressive sensibility and pleasing warmth of colour ... beautifully sung."  
– **BBC Music Magazine (four stars)**

"Mhairi Lawson demonstrates yet again what a marvellous singer she is. In my view, any singer of any tessitura should listen to her....meets the demands of the music superbly at every moment, contemplative when necessary, yet explosive and accurate almost beyond belief in her coloratura." – **Culturekiosque**

"...Mhairi Lawson's inimitable artistry...bell-like clarity of her tone and lithe articulation...few singers in this repertoire have the ability to make the voice glisten and shine so beguilingly." – **The Evening Standard**

### **Vivaldi in Arcadia, La Serenissima/Chandler, Avie AV 0031 (2003)**

"...centrepiece is the heroic-pastoral melodrama Dorilla in Tempe, from which Mhairi Lawson throws off three arias with great style. 'Rete lacci', with its dazzling ornamentation and high-wired devilry is particularly thrilling." – **The Evening Standard**

"All three [arias] give clear evidence of the increasing taste in Venice for the vocal pyrotechnics of the new Neapolitan style, and Mhairi Lawson's singing surely brings a taste of the kind of visceral thrill the star singers of the day were able to offer their audiences. Her stunning, wholehearted performance of the Giacomelli aria may occasionally put microphones under pressure, but it is almost worth the purchase money on its own." – **The Gramophone**

"Mhairi Lawson sings three arias from Dorilla in Tempe only one of which is by Vivaldi, the remaining two being by Hasse and Vivaldi's Piacenzan contemporary Geminiano Giacomelli....clear and forthright declamation...comfortable sense of style, above all in her handling of da capos, are a constant pleasure; but it is Vivaldi's own centrally placed aria, almost as stylistically up to date as its neighbours which shines brightest here, and which most alluringly reveals the subtleties of Lawson's sensitive artistry." – **BBC Music Magazine (four stars)**

### **Vivaldi Laudate Pueri in D, La Serenissima/Chandler, Venice (2000)**

"...sung with an effortless virtuosity...the highlight of the concert for me had to be Mhairi Lawson's laser-bright top Ds in the motet, the kind of clear and brilliant notes that pin you to your seat, knock your hat off and then blow you a kiss afterwards..."  
– **The Independent**

### **Sir John Clerk Cantatas, Sonnerie, Wigmore Hall (December 2003)**

"...sparkling performances of Leo Scotiae irritatus – a gloriously florid cantata on Scottish supremacy – and the Carissimi-like Odo di mesto intorno...Lawson is a gorgeous natural performer; sensitive to the phrasing of her fellow musicians, and, with prosecco-scented top notes that hit you like a shower of confetti and sunshine, a perfect ambassadress for this charming repertoire." – **The Independent**

### **Hasse Antonio e Cleopatra, Early Opera Company/Curnyn, Wigmore (2003)**

"... non-stop virtuoso singing...arias of extraordinary variety and vocal challenge...Mhairi Lawson, besequinned, brightly shining vocally, was all flame and fire as Cleopatra." – **The Times**

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"Mhairi Lawson has the vocal and personal glamour for Cleopatra, as well as the coloratura...she made Cleopatra's simile aria as she accepts death both sexy and moving." – **Concerto.net**

### **Purcell King Arthur, The Early Opera Company, Wigmore Hall (September 2002)**

'Mhairi Lawson, who had to metamorphose herself into Philidel, Cupid, a Mermaid and Venus, did so bright of eye and keen of voice...lusty good spirit and unflagging energy...' - **The Times**

### **Handel Alcina, The Early Opera Company, Iford Opera/Wigmore Hall (July 2002)**

"...Mhairi Lawson as the fantastically amoral Morgana, was in sparky form, middling every nuance of mood and helter-skelter divisions ..." – **The Times**

"The show was stolen, as Alcina often is, by the Morgana, this time in the voluptuous person of Mhairi Lawson. Ms Lawson knows how to work an audience, and by the end of 'Tornami a vagheggiar' she had most of the front rows eating out of her hand, she was entirely convincing.' – **S&H Opera Review Classical Music on the Web**

### **Handel Messiah, Usher Hall, Edinburgh**

"... Mhairi Lawson's soaring soprano almost defied superlatives" – **Edinburgh Evening News**

### **Bach Christmas Cantatas, Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh**

"...outstanding line up of soloists...sung with warmth and compassion by Lawson....the chance to reveal the glorious range of colours in her voice..." – **The Scotsman**

### **Bach St John Passion, McCreesh/The Lincoln Centre, New York**

"...Mhairi Lawson, a bright-toned soprano, radiated a joy that was a delight to see and hear..." – **The New York Times**

### **Purcell Fairy Queen, McCreesh/BBC Proms**

"...Mhairi Lawson's infectious wit....'I'm a sucker for Lawson's bright, flirtatious soprano..." – **The Independent**

"Highlights abounded...Mhairi Lawson's 'Hark the echoing air'....made fun of the traditional soprano sport of total domination. Vastly entertaining..." – **The Evening Standard**