
Allison Cook

Selected Reviews

Poulenc *La Voix Humaine* (Elle), Buxton Opera House (July 2025)

"...Allison Cook's outstanding variety and commitment in Poulenc's demanding central role, which she brings off with considerable aplomb."

- **George Hall, *The Stage***

"The stand-out of the evening, though, was Allison Cook as Elle in *La Voix Humaine*. The one-woman one-act opera, based on Cocteau's monodrama of 1930 and initially created with him as collaborator, is often a vehicle for a virtuosic and gifted dramatic soprano – here it became also a moving and tragic experience, both because of her gifts and because of the ingenious way in which it was paired with *Trouble in Tahiti*. Also appearing in the festival as Gertrude in Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet*, her soprano Falcon, with dramatic power over a very wide range, from coloratura at the top to a passionate chest voice, and acting ability made the solo role tragically moving, the climax of the evening."

- **Robert Beale, *The Arts Desk*******

"Cook created a compelling picture of Elle; her passion, pain and anxieties were etched into her voice and onto her face. With every phone call, her emotions became more unstable, reflecting her rising desperation, before an exhausted acceptance took over. Her vocal control and versatility ensured her singing was clear, articulate and detailed, and her phrasing was sensitively moulded to fit the emotional contours of the line. She moved easily into her upper register, in which her piercing voice could leave no one in doubt as to the anguish and pain that was overwhelming her. It was a dominant performance that was not at all compromised by having other characters on stage."

- **Alan Neilson, *OperaWire***

"The star of the evening was undoubtedly Allison Cook in *La Voix Humaine*. She played the solo role of the deserted woman speaking on the phone to her former lover and constantly interrupted as her desperation mounts. Her soprano ably encompassed Elle's emotional journey, highly expressive and at many points unaccompanied. All the cast were accomplished actors as well as singers."

- **National World**

"Nothing, though, can detract from Cook's electrifying performance." - **Mike Wheeler, *Classical Music Daily***

Ambroise Thomas *Hamlet* (Gertrude), Buxton International Festival (July 2025)

"Gertrude is Allison Cook, a real soprano falcon in the 19th century French style, with both pure high and incisive low registers, the ability to handle wide leaps from one to the other, and a great sense of the dramatic: she comes into her own in her scene with Ophélie at the wedding celebration and after Hamlet's rejection of her."

- **Robert Beale, *The Arts Desk***

"Allison Cook caps her performance as Gertrude in Thomas' *Hamlet* with a searing Elle, moving from tiny glimmers of hope to desperation and panic."

- **Mike Wheeler, *Classical Music Daily***

Strauss *Salome* (title role), Opera Antwerp & Opera Gent (December 2024)

"....in her gripping role portrait as Salome. The throaty depth of her mezzo alternates with high notes that border on

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hysteria and in between the Scottish singer repeatedly sprinkles in touching pianissimi. In terms of acting, she is a force to be reckoned with, she gives it her all and thus shows the numerous facets of her multilayered character."

- Jochen RÜth, *Opernfreund*

"....burgeoning into untrammelled fervor as it goes on. Not just this but Montag demands the most physical performance, with pretty alarming levels of erotic engagement between Salome and the head."

- Robert Thicknesse, *OperaNow*

Haubenstock-Ramati *Amerika* (Brunelda), Opernhaus Zürich (March 2024)

"The other rôle with only one attribution is that of the pathetic Brunelda, a fallen diva who falls in love with the homeless man, played by the excellent Allison Cook, a seasoned performer in this repertoire"

- Katy Oberlé, *Anaclase*

Allison Cook's role is that of the singer Brunelda, who sends her twelve-tone coloratura across the room in two grandiose quasi-solos; first a dissolving show number, then in a bathtub scene of the highest vocal presence (to put it mildly). A tour de force through the realms of modern singing..."

- Frank Piontek, *Der opernfreund.de*

"Brunelda was impressively sung by the British mezzo-soprano Allison Cook with her spectacular coloratura."

- Michael Fisher, *Seen and Heard International*

"Allison Cook plays Brunelda with a vast vocal range and impeccable ability to utilise it. In terms of acting, she makes the character even more sophisticated than Kafkas."

- Der Klassikkritiker

"Of course the singer Brunelda who gives Haubenstock-Ramati a glamorous performance with a distorted coloratura aria (Allison Cook does this with the most flying colours)." - *Oper Aktuell*

Wagner *Un brindis Sagrado* (Kundry), Orquesta de Extremadura (January 2023)

"Allison Cook, Kundry, sang with the intensity and expressive variety demanded by the complexity of the role. With resounding lower register and extremely secure top, when woken in the second act, the fiendishly difficult phrases, as if she were still dreaming, were sublimely executed. After being rejected by Parsifal, she sang the extended 'Gausamer!' passage with great dramatic effect and vocal intensity while trying to seduce Parsifal this time by means of compassion."

- Beckmesser

"For her part, Allison Cook completed this great cast with an extremely detailed interpretation in terms of phrasing, making credible with the changes of register and colour, the dual nature of Kundry as both a seductrice and as a repentant. The timbre is beautiful and the voice runs equally well in all registers."

- Scherzo

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Britten *The Turn of the Screw* (Miss Jessel), Ivan Fischer Opera Company (October 2022)

"Allison Cook's Miss Jessel , a dramatic soprano with a fascinating timbre and precise singing line, probably the character in which vocal quality and stage presence blended best." - **GB Opera**

"Allison Cook sings a magnetic and tormented Miss Jessel." - **Opera Click**

Wagner *Tannhäuser* (Venus), Wuppertaler Bühnen und Sinfonieorchester (March 2022)

"Allison Cook made the evening as Venus not only with her solid soprano voice but also with her diverse acting ability." - **ioco.de**

"When Allison Cook sings, Wagnerian and Strauss roles come to mind for the audience especially since the singer has such warmth and depth." - **mittelloge.de**

"Allison Cook convinces as Venus with lascivious playfulness and dark coloured highs." - **Online Musik Magazin**

Francesconi *Quartett* (Marquise de Merteuil), Teatro alla Scala (October 2019)

"The interpreters of the original production return and are masterful in their roles, mezzo Allison Cook as he Marquise de Merteul and baritone Robin Adams as the Vicomte de Valmont. Both were amazing, their voices using all possible registers and techniques, from the passionate to the declamatory up to the coloratura..." - **Renato Verga, Bachtrack**

Casablanca's *L'enigma di Lea* (title role), Gran Teatre del Liceu (February 2019)

"Mezzo soprano Allison Cook excelled in the demanding role of Lea both in the dramatic aspect as well as in her ease of projection and employing a timbre endowed with an ethereal quality." - **La Platea**

"As Lea, mezzo-soprano Allison Cook was mesmerizing. A stalwart supporter of edgy modern works, who was superb in the equally difficult 2017 production of "Quartett", here she combined an attractive presence, skilled acting and a beautiful voice." - **Metropolitan**

"Allison Cook knew how to understand Casablanca's music and produced a pure, translucent tone. He composed a character who experiences pain to ecstasy, through struggle and love to the other, expressed in a line of sensual singing on an axis that goes from modal to diatonism. The result was delicious and captivating." - **Bachtrack**

"(...)here rendered with intensity by the outstanding mezzo soprano Allison Cook, the high spiriling vocal writing

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projected thrillingly, her expertise in contemporary opera evident through her balance of complex vocal lines with effective, alluring stage action."

- **Musical Opinion Quarterly**

Strauss *Salome* (title role), English National Opera (September 2018)

"Allison Cook gives a totally committed performance in the title-role, keeping her nerve with steely assurance to sing with great skill and security."

- **Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph***

"Where she stood out was with the colour and drama of the voice; imperious and enticing in her dealings with Narraboth, desperate and fiery with Jochanaan, cold and forceful with Herod. Her final scene was compellingly delivered, sung with dramatic intelligence and entranced passion." - **Bachtrack**

"Allison Cook looks ideally the modern, young Salome this production requires and gives everything she has. A mezzo in what is nominally a soprano role, she sings with unusually dark colours, and a clean, rapier-like top."

- **Financial Times**

"Cook is a mesmerising singer-actor who never lacks intensity or intelligence."

- **The Times**

Turnage *Greek (Wife)*, Edinburgh International Festival (August 2017)

"Allison Cook as Eddy's real mum and lover whose aria lamenting the death of her abusive husband was matchless."

- **Classical Source**

Francesconi *Quartett* (Marquise de Merteuil), Gran Teatre del Liceu (March 2017)

"The two soloists fully assume the requirement of writing...it is first of all the astonishing performance of Allison Cook as the Marquise that will be remembered, passing from one hallucination to another at will, with pyrotechnics as much musical as they were psychic."

- **Anaclase**

"The Marquise de Merteuil was performed by the mezzo soprano Allison Cook; unmatched on stage and delivering a vocal performance which proved most convincing."

- **Beckmesser**