
Ben McAteer

Selected Reviews

Candide (Dr Pangloss), Theater an der Wien (January 2024)

"Ben McAteer as Dr. Pangloss is equipped with tangled hair à la Einstein. He sings it robustly and confidently."
- **Dr. Helmut Christian Mayer, *Opera Online***

"Ben McAteer made light work of Pangloss' witty numbers" - **Mark Pullinger, *Opera Now********

"Ben McAteer as Dr Pangloss gave a wonderful parody of the philosopher Voltaire"
- **Gerhard Persché, *Opera Magazine***

"Ben McAteer entertainingly presents the parody of a cute, quirky German provincial scholar."
- **Frieder Reininghaus, *Neue Muzik Zeitung***

"The cast delivered exceptional performances... [a further standout] was Ben McAteer, dual cast as Dr Pangloss and Martin."
- **Chanda VanderHart, *Bachtrack********

"...the concerned scholar Dr. Pangloss (Ben McAteer, funny and with tangled cliché hair à la Albert Einstein)"
- **Ljubiša Tošić, *Der Standard***

"Ben McAteer is a sonorous Dr. Pangloss with a fine sense of humor" - **Regine Müller, *Die Deutsche Buhne***

"Northern Irish baritone Ben McAteer gave a sonorous and funny Dr. Pangloss"
- **Harald Lacina, *Online Merker***

Iolanthe (Lord Mountarat), English National Opera, London Coliseum (October 2023)

"Comedy and vocal gold came once again from Ben McAteer as the Earl of Mountarat"
- **David Nice, *The Arts Desk********

"Ben McAteer as a closeted Earl of Mountarat [is] in terrific voice." - **Michael Billington, *The Guardian********

"Ben McAteer's imposing, finely-enunciated Mountarat was in the old-school Donald Adams class."
- **Christopher Webber, *Opera Magazine***

"Both Earls hit the spot – Ben McAteer (Mountarat) sang a lusty and jingoistic 'When Britain ruled the waves' and has all the makings of a future Lord Chancellor"
- **John Rhodes, *Seen and Heard International***

"If there is an institution in Great Britain which is not susceptible of any improvement at all, it is the ... *stage manager*! improvised baritone Ben McAteer, who wins this year's *Culture Whisper* trophy for quick thinking. The show briefly came to a standstill while a technical problem was resolved, and then cranked back into action."
- **Claudia Pritchard, *Culture Whisper***

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"Northern Ireland baritone, Ben McAt eer, revives his acclaimed role of Earl of Mountararat"

- **Tony Cooper, *The Opera Critic***

"Ruairi Bowen and Ben McAt eer make for a brilliant combination as Earls Tolloller and Mountararat respectively, with McAt eer also returning to his role."

- **Sam Smith, *Opera Online***

CD: *Maltworms and Milkmaids: Warlock and the Orchestra*, BBC Concert Orchestra [EM Records EMRCD080] (August 2023)

"...the star of the album is Ben McAt eer whose agreeably lyrical baritone can effortlessly muster plenty of much-called-upon swagger and suggestive tongue-in-cheekery."

- **Paul Riley, *BBC Music Magazine***

"... characterfully sung by baritone Ben McAt eer whose enunciation is excellent... [In 'Mr Belloc's Fancy' and 'Captain Stratton's Fancy'] McAt eer, robust of voice and crisp of diction, enters fully into the spirit... McAt eer proves an engaging storyteller."

- **Claire Seymour, *Opera Today***

Dove Mansfield Park (Sir Thomas Bertram), Byre Opera (June 2023)

"The biggest impact in Byre's updated production—everything from mobile phones to social media screenshots and lounge lizard costuming—came from characters with the most extrovert lines, notably Ben McAt eer's imposing Sir Thomas Bertram..."

- **Andrew Clark, *Opera Magazine***

Haydn *The Creation*, Ulster Orchestra, Ulster Hall (April 2023)

"Ben McAt eer, who sounded rich and savoury and heroic and who basically stole the show by leaning into the guileless comedy of Haydn's musical depictions of birds and beasts: bleating like a sheep and hollowing out his voice, poker-faced, for that most collectible of lines, 'In long dimension / Creeps with sinuous trace the worm'. Performances of *The Creation* tend, by their nature, to be cheerful occasions, but this is the first time I've witnessed an audience laughing out loud, or indeed rising to their feet for what looked like a wholly unpremeditated ovation."

- **Richard Bratby, *The Spectator***

Don Pasquale (Malatesta), Irish National Opera (November 2022)

"[Masterson] and Danby are ideally complemented – both vocally and in dramatic energy and comic timing – by baritone Ben McAt eer as Pasquale's friend Malatesta (the plastic surgeon)" - **Michael Dungan, *The Irish Times***

"Ben McAt eer as a Malatesta sounding more handsome of voice than the pre-show caution of his ailing state suggested: just perfect, in fact."

- **David Nice, *The Arts Desk* *******

"Ben McAt eer summons gravitas as Dr Malatesta"

- **Katy Hayes, *Irish Independent***

"McAt eer's fine visual portrayal of Malatesta" [whilst walking the part] - **Ian Fox, *Opera Magazine***

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"Strong work all round from the... bullish Malatesta (Ben McAteer)" - **Robert Thicknesse, *Opera Now***

Lalla Roukh (Baskir), Wexford National Opera (October 2022)

"The Irish baritone balanced *buffo* banter – the patter ever clear – with vocal finesse, in a strongly characterised performance."

- **Claire Seymour, *Opera Today***

"Ben McAteer, from Northern Ireland and making his Wexford debut, was Baskir, who has never seen the king (essential to plot plausibility so he can spend the opera ignorantly frustrating his boss). He is a dupe made sympathetic by a fine voice... His sparring with Mirza was entertaining, vocally and histrionically... This season is labelled "Magic and Music" and what casting Wexford can often conjure up."

- **Roy Westbrook, *Bachtrack********

"Ben McAteer's natural charisma and histrionic know-how meant his Baskir almost stole the show"

- **Hugh Canning, *Opera Magazine***

"...baritone Ben McAteer capering in the chief comic role of court official Baskir" - **George Hall, *The Stage********

"Ben McAteer as Baskir is responsible for the funny moments. He has a hard time keeping the princess away from the poet and scores with a wonderful buffo-baritone. In interaction with O'Sullivan, McAteer also convinces with humorous play when he succumbs to the maid's attempts to flirt and thus allows himself to be distracted so that Lalla-Roukh can meet her Nourreddin again. Another highlight is the duet with Nourreddin in the second act, in which he tries to trick the king without realizing that he is talking to the king himself. When he subsequently fears for his life because Nourreddin and Lalla-Roukh have tricked him, he expresses this in a brilliant couplet, in which he is literally thrown across the stage by the dancers in the shopping cart like on a ship in a storm."

- **Thomas Molke, *Online Musik Magazin***

Utopia Ltd (King Paramount), National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company (September 2022)

"The singing was splendid, too. McAteer ...who'd sounded positively Wagnerian as he announced his resolve to turn his kingdom into a limited liability company at the end of Act One, was an imposing and intensely sympathetic figure"

- **Richard Bratby, *The Arts Desk********

"The usual G&S material was all present, nonsense and wit balanced with lyrical tunes and compelling ensembles. The cast captured it all with enthusiasm, with hats in the first act differentiating the suited men. Ben McAteer was suavely confident as King Paramount"

- **David Smythe, *Bachtrack********

"Ben McAteer's portrayal of a rather ineffectual king who turns into an effective one is finely played – in the trio where he eavesdrops on the plotting of Phantis and Scaphio, he conveys decided glee."

- **Catriona Graham, *The Opera Critic***

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***Iolanthe* (Lord Mountararat), National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company (September 2022)**

"[Ben] dominated the proceedings"

- Hugh Canning, *Opera Magazine*

***The Gondoliers / Utopia Ltd* (Grand Inquisitor / King Paramount), Scottish Opera, Hackney Empire (April 2022)**

"Ben McAteer makes a fine King Paramount, well-meaning, dithering and longing to be free of his two pushy advisers"

- Tim Ashley, *The Guardian*****

"Ben McAteer was King Paramount, a tall, genial presence with a sunny baritone, and together with Charlie Drummond as the Girton-educated Princess Zara he set the musical tone at a consistently high level"

- Richard Bratby, *The Spectator*

Maxwell-Davies *The Lighthouse*, Irish National Opera (December 2021)

"The singing of the three roles by Gavan Ring, Ben McAteer and John Molloy was superb."

- Noel Megahey, *Opera Journal*

***The Gondoliers / Utopia Ltd* (Grand Inquisitor / King Paramount), Scottish Opera (November 2021)**

"Ben McAteer upped his artistic profile with a deliciously camp portrayal of the Grand Inquisitor – a mature, stage-filling impersonation that kept within the bounds of taste."

- Andrew Clark, *Opera Magazine*

"Ben McAteer's Grand Inquisitor, a delicious picture of pomposity, gives an outstanding comic performance."

- Mark Brown, *The National (Scotland)*

"Outstanding were Ben McAteer's charmingly easygoing King Paramount..." - Ken Walton, *The Scotsman*****

"Though the production maintains a light-heartedness, an ounce of villainy can be sniffed out by Ben McAteer's Grand Inquisitor, a booming and delicious role. And though not necessarily the most diabolical of Gilbert & Sullivan's rogues, McAteer devours the scenes, capitalising on every opportunity with his bass-baritone and imposing vocals."

- Dominic Corr, *The Reviews Hub – Scotland*

"Ben McAteer was suavely confident as King Paramount"

- David Smythe, *Bachtrack*

***La bohème* (Schaunard), Irish National Opera (March 2021)**

"Ben McAteer was an excellent Schaunard"

- *Opera Magazine*

"Ben McAteer and John Molloy also acquitted themselves well in their respective roles – there were no weak links in the cast."

- Robert Beattie, *Sean and Heard International*

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Hansel and Gretel (Father), Irish National Opera (February 2020)

"Miriam Murphy and Ben McAteer were powerfully-voiced parents" - **Opera Magazine**

Die Fledermaus (Eisenstein), Northern Ireland Opera (September 2019)

"Ben McAteer was a game Eisenstein..."

- **Robert Thicknesse, Opera Now**

"Ben McAteer found ample humour in Eisenstein's self-inflicted quandary..." - **Michael Quinn, Opera Magazine**

La belle Hélène (Calchas), Blackheath Halls Opera (July 2019)

"Ben McAteer gave an object lesson in comic opera as Calchas" - **Yehuda Shapiro, Opera Magazine**

Die tote Stadt (Frank/ Fritz), RTE National Symphony Orchestra (April 2019)

"Ben McAteer contributed a sonorous and sympathetic portrait of Frank, with a particularly fine rendition of the waltz song 'Mein Sehnen, mein Wähnen'"

- **Ian Fox, Opera Magazine**

"Baritone Ben McAteer really stood out in his different roles as Frank and Fritz. His aria "Mein Sehnen, mein Wähnen" was touchingly sung and in his mid- range his voice possessed a noble, romantic tone."

- **Andrew Larkin, Bachtrack**

The Marriage of Figaro (Title), Cork Opera House (March 2019)

"Ben McAteer impressed as a powerful Figaro with a commanding stage presence."

- **Cathy Desmond, Irish Examiner**

CD: Sullivan The Light of the World, BBC Concert Orchestra [Dutton Epoch 2CDLX7356] (November 2018)

"Among the excellent team of soloists there are standout contributions from the baritone Ben McAteer..."

- **Andrew Achenbach, Gramophone**

"All soloists make their mark... but ultimately it's baritone Ben McAteer's emphatic Jesus that impresses most."

- **George Hall, BBC Music Magazine***** (Choral & Song Choice)**

Le Nozze di Figaro (Count Almaviva), Irish National Opera (April 2018)

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"Ben McAteer conveys youthful brio as the frustrated Count who believes he's making all the right moves but can't quite figure out why he is so consistently thwarted." - **The Irish Times**

"The Count, in Ben McAteer's authoritative baritone, uses his height to great advantage and makes for a charming villain, as he bumbles about getting outwitted by all." - **Irish Independent**

"It's the Count who has the trickiest role to maintain, keeping on the right side of caricature that can either go the way of pathetic bumbling fool to unsympathetic cheating lecher, neither of which tend towards a convincing redemption. Ben McAteer's Almaviva carried a measure of those characteristics, but - in line with the well-considered period setting - was more of a last-gasp opportunist finding that the times (and women's rights) were fast catching up with his sort. His singing was perfectly measured for technique and character, a perfect foil for whoever he was on stage with at any given moment." - **Opera Journal**

"As for the lecherous Count, Ben McAteer looked every inch the part, towering above the rest of the cast, the sweet heft of his baritone voice projecting very well." - **BachTrack**

"Ben McAteer is terrific playing the Count as a slightly thick toff." - **Irish Examiner**

"The Count was a suitably dominating physical and vocal presence, booming out clearly even in larger ensembles." - **Journal of Music**

"Ben McAteer presents an intriguing figure, smoothly-sung, decisive yet distracted, a reading of the role that is disarmingly naturalistic." - **Goldenplec Music News**

Iolanthe (Earl of Mountarat), English National Opera (April 2018)

"As Tolloller and Mountarat, Ben Johnson and Ben McAteer were irresistible – their vowels deliciously Victorian-aristocrat, their acting only just over the top..." - **Opera Magazine**

"Ben McAteer gets the gormless dignity of Lord Mountarat down pat, and when he's not camping it up with Ben Johnson's Tolloller...swaggers sonorously through 'When Britain Really Ruled the Waves.'" - **The Spectator**

"The brace of earls, Tolloller (Ben Johnson) and Mountarat (Ben McAteer), are the smoothest and wittiest of the lot, and their singing is sublime." - **What's On Stage**

"The pair of dippy earls, Ben Johnson (Earl Tolloller) and Ben McAteer (Earl of Mountarat), sang beautifully and have the makings of a classic comic duo. Next, their own show?" - **The Observer**

"As the two Earls, Tolloller and Mountarat respectively, Ben Johnson and Ben McAteer show a pleasing instinct for the G&S idiom, and the self-deprecating satire of the latter's 'When Britain Really Ruled the Waves', as Gilbert lampoons the two-party system, stinging hit the mark." - **Opera Today**

"Ben Johnson and Ben McAteer find exactly the right mode of deadpan deliberation which, in their heyday, the

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unjustly-axed D'Oyly Carte company (which some of us still remember) had to a T." - **The Independent**

"Ben Johnson and Ben McAteer seemed to be having the time of their lives as the two love-smitten Earls, all deft foot-work, delightful characterisation, and pukka accents, yet superbly sung too." - **Robert Hugill**

"The rival Earls Tolloller and Mountarat, tenor Ben Johnson and baritone Ben McAteer, sing just as beautifully and act out their more-than-bromance, public-school style, deliciously." - **The Arts Desk**

"As the hereditary peers Ben Johnson and Ben McAteer are nicely differentiated; the latter comes close to stealing the show with 'When Britain really ruled the waves'." - **Classical Source**

From the House of the Dead (Goryanchikov), Welsh National Opera (October 2017)

"Outstanding among a consistently fine ensemble [is] Ben McAteer as Dostoyevsky's representative, the resilient aristocrat, Goryanchikov" - **Financial Times**

"But the ensemble cast is beyond reasonable criticism, not least for the uniform excellence of its enunciation of Pountney's serviceable translation...while Adrian Thompson, Ben McAteer and Mark Le Brocq shine in lesser roles." - **The Telegraph**

"As Goryanchikov, Ben McAteer has less to do and sing than one might have expected, given that the character's experience, in a sense shapes the work, he is there as a political dissident, not as a thief and/or a murderer like most of the others, and the work begins with his entry into the prison and ends with his release from it; even so, McAteer made one warm to the character's dignity and humanity, both in the way he resisted the taunts of some of the other prisoners and in the kindness of his treatment of Aleya." - **Seen & Heard International**

Le Nozze di Figaro (Figaro), Scottish Opera (October 2016)

"Ben McAteer has blossomed since his time as a Scottish Opera Emerging Artist. Now singing lead roles, he displayed an ideally nuanced power. I anticipate he will be a part of the company's future over the coming years." - **Scottish Daily Mail**

"Ben McAteer's Figaro is solid, both in voice and acting performance." - **The Stage**

"Gravitas was finally achieved by Act IV in Figaro's misogynistic aria "Aprite un po' quegli occhi", lit with almost gothic brilliance by a single white spotlight, and in Susanna's "Deh vieni non tardar". Indeed, Ben McAteer's Figaro and, in particular, Anna Devin's Susanna were the two stand-outs." - **BachTrack**

The Mikado (Pish Tush), Scottish Opera (May-July 2016)

"But it was the three noble lords who came close to stealing the show...Ben McAteer's Pish-Tush was a comic

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masterclass, looking for all the world like a sub-Pythesque colonial caricature, complete with pith helmet and cricket bat. But his voice is first rate" - **Scottish Daily Mail**

"Ben McAteer, fresh from Scottish Opera's stunning recent new commission *The Devil Inside*, demonstrated that he could hold his own in a very different genre. Here he was an absurdly camp comic Pish-Tush who was considerably more funny than most absurdly camp comic turns usually are" - **Opera Britannia**

"Ben McAteer was a wonderfully camp Pish-Tush using semaphore to reveal his inner desires in "Our great Mikado, virtuous man"" - **BachTrack**

***The Devil Inside* (James), Scottish Opera/Music Theatre Wales (January-March 2016)**

"...the cast inhabited their roles with panache. Ben McAteer explored the Wotan-esque extremes of James" - **Opera Magazine**

"Ben McAteer (the John Mather Charitable Trust Scottish Opera Emerging Artist, 2015/16) was definitely the highlight of our night. He sang with a modern, contemporary sound that cut through the ample orchestra and over some extremely dramatic scoring for the pit. His range was astounding and the ease of production was inspiring." - **Schmopera**

"Ben McAteer sings the principal role of James. He has a solid, powerful baritone and really good stage presence. This is the most emotionally complex role and he conveys the thoughtful, ambiguous character well, especially at moments of interior, lyrical, reflection such as when he compares his own, damned, state to a poor couple crossing the road in the rain." - **Opera Ramblings**

"Ben McAteer was James, the hapless first bottle buyer, using his riches to become a property magnate, his high baritone part expressing the range of initial wariness, delight and greed...there is not a weak link in this uniformly strong cast." - **Bachtrack**

"Ben McAteer (James) is a Scottish Opera Emerging Artist for 2015/16 and, on this performance, the accolade is justified. His love scenes with Catherine have warmth and sincerity. As he explains the wedding anniversary presents, or leaps to conclusions about what Catherine is trying to tell him, he engages our sympathy." - **OperaCritic**

***The Magic Flute* (Papageno), Northern Ireland Opera (September 2016)**

"An enormously likable, robustly-sung performance from Newry-born baritone Ben McAteer...a natural comic actor with the bumbling, puppy-like demeanour of a youthful Oliver Hardy. His closing duet with Papageno was pure catharsis, the most simply joyful moment in the entire evening...a heartening and - yes - magical evening." - **Opera Magazine**

"Leading the charge was Newry baritone Ben McAteer, a wonderfully affable, endearing Papageno, making his professional operatic debut. He's a natural actor, and much more will be heard of him in the future."

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- **Belfast Telegraph**

"Ben McAteer's Papageno is more than a side-show. His comic timing and delivery of the folk-song-like melodies and patter are hugely rewarding."

- **Irish Times**

"When you're talking about an entertaining Magic Flute, you're talking about one where Papageno makes a strong impact and Ben McAteer's performance, in dungarees covered with bird-crap, was indeed the stand-out routine of the night, his voice agile, his enunciation clear and his personality engaging." - **Opera Journal**

Hansel & Gretel (Father), Sinfonia D'Amici April 2013)

"All six solo singers delivered fully-rounded performances and sang with grace and individuality – and, in the case of Ben McAteer as Father, something more. This remarkable young baritone, who was runner-up at the 2012 Kathleen Ferrier Awards...is of a calibre that bespeaks a great future." - **Classical Source**

Le Nozze di Figaro (Count Almaviva), Guildhall School of Music & Drama (March 2013)

"Ben McAteer provided the most rounded account of any of the characters assigned to the singers. Initially he did not come across as an ogre on his first surreptitious advance to Susanna in her room in Act One, but rather as an imperfect human who is not in command of his passions and urges. Rightly this was not a reading about stark black and white moral opposites: there was nothing to suggest that somebody in Susanna's position would automatically rebuff him out of horror or disgust. McAteer grew into an angrier and more forceful figure as Almaviva's plans become increasingly thwarted, for instance when he tries to gain access to the Countess's wardrobe in Act Two. In his reflective scena at the beginning of Act Three where the Count discloses more of his human foibles and flaws, McAteer remained outwardly and musically firm, conveying Almaviva's frustrations and complexities. There was also a certain nobility at the denouement of the drama as he asked the Countess for forgiveness – in effect standing-in for all humanity in seeking remission for its shortcomings." - **Classical Source**

Kathleen Ferrier Awards 2012

"I would have handed the Song Prize to 24-year-old Ben McAteer, who showed a maturity of musicianship beyond his years. His immediate engagement with the text of Schumann's ballad Belsazar was exemplary and he pitched wistful songs by Gurney and Harty just the right side of sentimentality. In arias from Eugene Onegin and Così fan tutte he was scarcely less impressive, singing with an engagingly understated ease and fluency. His tuning was immaculate, his tone focused. Another one to listen out for." - **The Telegraph**

"The Irish McAteer also deserved his own spotlight: with his attractive timbre and musical intelligence, he's a singer of genuine potential." - **The Times**

"I felt that McAteer's communication of the text, as he effortlessly embodied a range of characters in different dramatic and emotional situations, put him in the running for first prize. Whether outpouring Romantic angst or

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relishing the ironic wit of Classicism, every word was crystal clear and every musical gesture perfectly matched to the sentiments of the text."

- ***Opera Today***