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# Caitlin Hulcup

## Selected Reviews

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### **Britten *The Rape of Lucretia* (title role), Potsdamer Winteroper, Potsdamer Schlosstheater (November 2021)**

"Caitlin Hulcup as Lucretia shows in an impressive way how a once self-confident woman almost implodes psychologically after being raped. Her voice then sounds paler, more broken."

- Harald Asel, *Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg*

"Caitlin Hulcup performs the role with a gentle, dignified alto and with growing exaltation."

- Andreas Berger, *Braunschweiger Zeitung*

### **Arne Artaxerxes, The Mozartists, Signum SIGCD672 (May 2021)**

"...and the cast list is no less starry, from... Hulcup's Arbaces makes short work of the showpiece 'Amid a thousand racking woes', giving us the best of both worlds: a countertenor's lightness and a mezzo's broader colours."

- Alexandra Coghlan, *Gramophone*

### **Wagner *Die Walküre* (Fricka), Esplanade Concert Hall, Singapore (January 2020)**

"It was [Warwick Fyfe's] stage-wife, Caitlin Hulcup, who stole the preceding scene as the imperious, shrewish Fricka. ... Another wonderful actor, she acted as much with her rich, secure, velvety mezzo as with her facial expressions, exiting triumphantly after brow-beating Wotan into submission – with a devastating arch of her left brow – leaving him to lick his wounds."

Derek Lim, *the flying inkpot*

### **Gluck *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Orfeo), Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra (October 2019)**

"Orfeo was sung by Australian mezzo-soprano Caitlin Hulcup, a better singer of which cannot be found. She has a noble, solid, long-lasting, full-bodied voice. Hulcup's Orfeo retained her melancholic dignity when confronted with the Manala guards, who were furious in the opera's dramatic and gloomy scene."

Hannu-Ilari Lampila, *Helsingin Sanomat*

### **Humperdink *Hansel and Gretel* (Hansel), Grange Park Opera (June 2019)**

"Caitlin Hulcup and Soraya Mafi were quite simply the most visually plausible Hansel and Gretel I have ever seen, boisterous anarchic children of the sort that always land in trouble and wangle their way out of it. Their singing was perfection – Hulcup all boyish bravado, Mafi mercurial and sparkling."

Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph*\*\*\*\*\*

"Caitlin Hulcup is outstanding as Hansel, both in her phrasing and in her convincingly boyish persona."

Barry Millington, *Evening Standard*\*\*\*\*\*

"Caitlin Hulcup's Hansel and Soraya Mafi's Gretel are of truly international class."

David Mellor, *Daily Mail*\*\*\*\*

"As the children, Caitlin Hulcup and Soraya Mafi are outstanding, brimming with high spirits and optimism. ... Hulcup's lovely mezzo expresses any amount of adolescent diffidence, courage and affection. Hulcup is a head taller than Mafi, which puts the finishing touch to their credibility as brother and sister, and throughout they are immensely affecting and strongly directed."

Peter Reed, *Classical Source*\*\*\*\*\*

"[Mafi's] lightness contrasted with Hulcup's more rugged, rambunctious Hänsel, whose darker and rounder sound spoke of that character's earthiness – very much his father's son."

Benjamin Poore, *Bachtrack*

"Caitlin Hulcup and Soraya Mafi were entirely credible as the children, brimming with high spirits and optimism... Hulcup's lovely, artless mezzo was the right fit for Hänsel's mix of diffidence, courage and affection. Hulcup is a head taller than Mafi, which capped the pair's plausibility, Mafi's Gretel touchingly filling the gaps left by Hänsel's occasionally faltering bravado."

Peter Reed, *Opera Magazine*

"Soraya Mafi and Caitlin Hulcup made a delightful pairing as Gretel and Hansel, for all the picturesque charm of the characters' depiction there was a fundamental seriousness to their performance which emphasised the music's quality. ... [Mafi] was matched by Hulcup's wonderfully boyish Hansel (one of the best 'boys' I have seen in this opera for a long time), with the two voices blending and contrasting. They kept the action moving so that the scenes between them in the first two acts, which can sometimes drag somewhat, flew by."

Robert Hugill, *Opera Today*

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"the vocal beauty of ... Caitlin Hulcup and Soraya Mafi."

**Hugh Canning, *The Sunday Times***

"Caitlin Hulcup, a lively, lanky teenage Hänsel"

**Richard Fairman, *Financial Times***

### **Handel *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disingann (Piacere)*, Royal Danish Opera (April 2019)**

"Lustful, pleasure - here in a gold-plated mezzo-voice, Caitlin Hulcup."

**Ulla Strømberg, *Kulturkupeen***

"Caitlin Hulcup sings her with juicy and delicious mezzo voice."

**Thomas Michelsen, *Politiken***

"The four soloists are more than extraordinary ... Caitlin Hulcup has a truly exuberant mezzo voice."

**Lars-Erik Larsson, *Norra Skåne***

"For the sweetness, the melancholy, the abundance of timbre, the painfully beautiful ornaments at the Dacapo, there is a second applause for Caitlin Hulcup."

**Jan Brachmann, *Frankfurter Allgemeine***

"Caitlin Hulcup's delivery of *Lascia La Spina* is very intimate and leaves me with an open mouth and chills. Together with the subsequent duet *Il Bel Pianto*, it constitutes the clear highlight of the second act."

**Line Kirsten Nikolajsen, *den4vaeg.dk***

"Piacere is sung by Australian Caitlin Hulcup and she is a pleasure to listen to; her mezzo soprano voice is as dark and rich as good chocolate; it is sexy and full of will."

**Ars Artis**

"a brilliant [mezzo] soprano, Caitlin Hulcup."

**Gregers Dirckinck-Holmfeld, *gregersDH***

"The soaring high tones of the soprano emerge during giant showdowns between the vigorous Caitlin Hulcup as the Pleasure, the incredibly accurate Sonia Prina as the Wisdom, and the deeply controlled Joshua Ellicott as Time."

**Søren Schauser, *Berlinske Tidende***

"Caitlin Hulcup is powerful as Piacere."

**Sceneblog**

"The Australian mezzo-soprano Caitlin Hulcup was Piacere: gold in attire, golden in vocal resister, and seductive and insatiable."

**Valdemar Lønsted, *Dagbladet Information***

### **Radamisto (Title Role), Opera Lafayette, Washington and New York (February 2019)**

"Australian mezzo-soprano Caitlin Hulcup made an outstanding American debut in the title role. Hulcup applied a sweet, honeyed legato to the gorgeous "Cara sposa, amato bene," adorned with elaborate embellishments in the da capo repeat. Her melismas were exceptionally clear and balanced across a wide ambitus, as in "Ferite, Uccidete," in Act I. The cadenza to this aria, as well as others, featured some high-flying excursions into her upper range as well, a sort of virile sound matched by her convincing male stage characterization."

**Chris T. Downey, *Washington Classical Review***

"Tall and slim, she made an astonishingly convincing male and ably embodied her character's joy and anguish. Her trim coppery mezzo rang out with bold confidence ... particularly fine was her sneering "Vanne sorella ingrata," and she ended strongly with her wrenchingly done "Qual nave smaritta," the opera's final aria."

**Christopher Corwin, *Parterre Box***

"In the title role, the soprano Caitlin Hulcup managed to give her voice a masculine cast, looking and sounding more like a countertenor, with the round, slightly falsetto-based vocal production, than a female singer."

**Anne Midgette, *The Washington Post***

"I was especially touched by the beauty of [Caitlin's] voice and the emotion it carried in an early act II aria bemoaning Zenobia's apparent suicide."

**OperaGene**

"With regal bearing Ms. Hulcup projected one of the more impressive male personas I've ever encountered in a trouser role. Her vocalism was assured throughout, from the clarion tone and soft legato phrasing in the rhapsodic lament "Ombra cara" to often elaborate fioratura in her arias as well as frequent highflying cadenzas."

**Richard B. Beams, *Opera Con Brio***

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"Radamisto has a lot to be upset about in this opera. But in Caitlin Hulcup's performance, the exiled prince was all heroic centering and surface calm. This set up his one emotional outburst in the second act: the aria "Ombra cara mia sposa", in which Radamisto believes his wife to be dead. Ms. Hulcup penetrated the depths of grief and loss over a slow, pulsing orchestra, using her chest voice to memorable effect. Appropriately heroic joy was found in the Act II finale, as Radamisto was reunited with Zenobia."

**Paul J. Pelkonen, *Superconductor***

### **Purcell *Dido and Aeneas* (Dido), Academy of Ancient Music (October 2018)**

"[Hulcup's] assumption of Dido was movingly spontaneous and sincere – a tragic everywoman rather than a tragedy queen."

**Yehuda Shapiro, *Opera Magazine***

"It wasn't easy for the singers. At the same time as delivering Purcell, they had to clutch a white mask, plus a trailing cloth, and adopt emotive gestures. Caitlin Hulcup and Ashley Riches, both vigorously expressive, went farther still, doubling as co-puppeteers, skilfully guiding their Dido and Aeneas masks towards crumpling with sorrow, attempting a kiss or dying to Purcell's best-known tune. Both performed extraordinarily well."

**Geoff Brown, *The Times* \*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup replaced the indisposed mezzo Christine Rice, but to absolutely no detriment. Her voice is organ-like, round and resonant, with gorgeous overtones, and a sense of line that made the recitatives hold taut the dramatic string pinched by Egarr's continuo section at the other end. Her big number, Dido's Lament, was quick, perhaps detrimentally so. The bass-line was launched by Egarr with cruel, spare inexorability, contrasting with the pathos of Hulcup's performance, first dreamlike, then pleading. It hurt in all the right places, a deeply moving performance enriched by a carefully controlled vibrato and tasteful ornamentation in keeping with the production's restraint: what a pity it's only getting the one performance."

**Benjamin Poore, *Bachtrack* \*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup did well to deliver such an expressive Dido's lament while guiding her puppet to a dignified end."

**Richard Fairman, *Financial Times* \*\*\*\***

"The singers included ... best of all, Caitlin Hulcup, mellow and then anguished as Dido."

**Erica Jeal, *The Guardian* \*\*\*\***

"Australian mezzo Hulcup gamely made her puppet double live, move, and suffer, while she sang with unerring control and an emotional fluency in no way impeded by her additional job."

**Boyd Tonkin, *The Arts Desk* \*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup, managed not only to give a creditable account of the role but also managed to project her emotions via her voice and the puppet. ... Hulcup's assumption of the role was direct and eloquent, a strategy that climaxed in a tremendously powerful 'Thy hand, Belinda' that leads to her final, great, moment."

**Colin Clarke, *Seen and Heard International***

### **Bellini *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Romeo), Victorian Opera (September 2018)**

"The cast physically boosted the drama by often engaging with each other and moving to different music stands – even abandoning them altogether as Caitlin Hulcup regularly did, most notably for Romeo's final, heartbreaking aria. Outstanding in this trouser role, which she took literally in black slacks topped with a different jacket for each act, Hulcup moved with a slightly masculine demeanour, energetically bit her thumb at Romeo's rival, and heightened her death scene by producing an invisible bottle of poison. Her powerful, radiant voice was also rich with meaning and emotion."

**Patricia Maunder, *Limelight Magazine* \*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup certainly proved a worthy counterpart [for Jessica Pratt]. ... Caitlin Hulcup's portrayal of the young Montague was faultless. Romeo's Act I cavatina requires power at both ends of the mezzo range; the bottom can often result in a murky, unsupported sound and the top a dull screech. It is truly difficult singing and Hulcup was impressive, scaling the demanding terrain with elegance and strength."

**Bridget Davies, *Sydney Morning Herald* \*\*\*\***

### **Handel *Samson* (Micah), Dunedin Consort (April 2018)**

"The most impressive solo vocal performance of the night however was given by Australian mezzo Caitlin Hulcup, who sang the role of Samson's friend Micah with a deep velvetiness and dark, dusky hues."

**Miranda Heggie, *ArtsDesk***

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"[The choir's] enunciation was as clear as that of the soloists, where mezzo Caitlin Hulcup, in the role of Micah, Samson's friend and - it sometimes seems - Jiminy Cricket-like conscience, was also worthy of special mention."

**Keith Bruce, *The Herald* \*\*\*\*\***

### **Mozart *Idomeneo* (Idamante), Teatro Nacional de São Carlos, Lisbon (March 2018)**

"Fortunately, an excellent cast carried the performance, thanks to great female singers such as ... the excellent [mezzo] Caitlin Hulcup, who was an Idamante of high vocal quality..."

**Pedro Boléo, *Publico***

### **Monteverdi *The Return of Ulysses* (Penelope), The Royal Opera (January 2018)**

"There was indeed a huge amount to be impressed by. From her first appearance in floor-length white crêpe, Hulcup's Penelope was poised, careful, often almost static, amid a sea of characters that writhed around her in black and muted greens and greys. ... Whether or not Hulcup's stage presence accorded with the movement director Maxine Braham's original plans for the role, she slotted seamlessly into place, her gestures unforced, her desolation painfully believable. And whether or not Hulcup really had 'learnt the role from scratch' (as Williams marvelled in his announcement), her vocal delivery was all big picture: long lines and subtle phrasing, prioritizing forward momentum over minute details—precisely what is needed, in fact, for this most stubbornly inert of roles. But perhaps above all it was the hard edge of her cool, steely mezzo that clinched it. In the opera's earlier stages, her Penelope sounded as tough and single-minded as we might expect; at the end, however, as Monteverdi's musical fabric finally relaxes, warming lyrically into the reunion with Ulysses, Hulcup still sounded shockingly cold. And small wonder, as Hyemi Shin's rotating grey ring-doughnut stage carried Ulysses slowly away from her once more in the opera's final moments this was a deeply ambivalent take on the story, and one that was all the more emotionally powerful for it."

**Flora Willson, *Opera Magazine***

"a compelling and beautifully sung portrait of Penelope."

**Hugh Canning, *The Sunday Times***

"The Australian mezzo Caitlin Hulcup sang for her – with a sepulchral beauty of tone – from the pit."

**Michael Church, *The Independent* \*\*\*\*\***

"... her music sung with admirable intensity from the pit by the splendid Caitlin Hulcup."

**Rupert Christiansen, *Telegraph* \*\*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup sang strongly from the pit."

**Richard Fairman, *Financial Times* \*\*\*\*\***

"The cast is splendid, too: eloquent voices, well-matched to character ... Caitlin Hulcup sang the part with lovely shaded expression."

**Richard Bratby, *The Spectator***

"Caitlin Hulcup made a good fist of singing from the pit – remarkably so, given the announcement that she had learned the role over the weekend."

**David Karlin, *Bachtrack***

"Caitlin Hulcup, with a very interesting timbre and total command."

**Tom Sutcliffe, *Opera Now***

"poised, her gestures unforced, her desolation painfully believable. ... her vocal delivery was all big picture: long lines and subtle phrasing ... precisely what is needed"

**Flora Willson, *Opera Magazine***

"With the great mezzo Christine Rice voiceless for at least a night, and rising star Caitlin Hulcup singing for her from the midst of the instruments in the pit right at the centre of the Roundhouse, how could faithful Penelope's final acceptance of her long-lost husband Ulysses (Roderick Williams) achieve transcendence? Yet it was moving to tears, thanks to the exquisite sensitivities of three very special performers and Christian Curnyn's Early Opera Company. ... The release of the final duet still spread its balm as Hulcup, often with her back to Williams owing to the revolves, blended perfectly. Hers is a very different mezzo from Rice's, ... but she is already the "real" Penelope's equal in musicality and engagement."

**David Nice, *ArtsDesk* \*\*\*\*\***

"She was voiced, and very beautifully, from the pit by the fast-learning Australian mezzo Caitlin Hulcup."

**Claudia Pritchard, *CultureWhisperer* \*\*\*\*\***

"... all was down to three magnificent singers: Roderick Williams..., Christine Rice, who acted bravely and with total commitment as his despairing wife despite being rendered voiceless by a throat infection, and her fellow mezzo Caitlin Hulcup, who sat with

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the orchestra and sang a keening Penelope pitstop. (This exceptional Australian mezzo should be a star by now. With luck this showing will give the powers-that-be a prod.)"

**Mark Valencia, *Whats On Stage* \*\*\*\*\***

### **Martin *Le vin herbé* (Iseult), Welsh National Opera (February 2017)**

"Caitlin Hulcup was a radiantly gilded Iseult, moving about the stage with grace yet also impulsiveness, quickening as she abandoned herself credibly to the potion-induced love. With the texture of her mezzo so evenly sustained throughout her range, and flecked with distinctive timbre, she measured the emotional weight of every phrase with instinctive musicality"

**Rian Evans, *Opera Magazine***

"Caitlin Hulcup is a revelation, wonderfully intense as Iseult the Fair."

**Richard Morrison, *The Times***

"Caught between overwhelming passion and chivalric duty, Tristan and Iseult - sublimely sung by Tom Randle and Caitlin Hulcup - can neither live nor die without the other."

**Steph Power, *The Independent* \*\*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup is a magnificent Iseult. Her voice has an expressive richness throughout her mezzo range."

**Rhian Evans, *The Guardian* \*\*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup as Iseult sings with unassailable intensity, especially in the moment she crosses the stage saying she always loved Tristan most. Her voice is in stark contrast to what happens to her - it seems that it could survive anything."

**Kate Kellaway, *The Observer***

"Caitlin Hulcup as Iseult preserved a movingly chaste, untouchable quality."

**Ivan Hewett, *The Telegraph* \*\*\*\*\***

"A fine cast is headed by the strong Tristan of Tom Randle and magnetic Iseult of Caitlin Hulcup, vocally radiant ..."

**Richard Fairman, *Financial Times***

"But the bulk of the evening's burden falls on Tom Randle's austere, troubled Tristan and Caitlin Hulcup's eloquent Iseult, and they do not disappoint, their finely tuned performances perfectly matching the subtlety and discrimination of Martin's delicate score."

**George Hall, *The Stage***

"Hulcup, in particular, sings with a poignancy and strength that improves throughout the piece, the physically frenzied scenes on the ship as she tries frantically to meet with the dying Tristan being exceptionally moving."

**The Reviews Hub**

"His beloved Iseult is sung, radiantly, by mezzo Caitlin Hulcup."

**Mark Valencia, *What's On Stage* \*\*\*\*\***

### **Handel *Theodora* (Irene), Pinchgut Opera (December 2016)**

"It is difficult to know what to commend most strongly - ... the glowing smoothness of contralto Caitlin Hulcup, or simply the quality of the score that the composer thought his best. ... Caitlin Hulcup as Irene, leader of the persecuted Christians, sings with a sound of rounded firmness, fluid mellifluousness and natural attractiveness."

**Peter McCallum, *The Sydney Morning Herald* \*\*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup proves the perfect foil as Irene, capturing the tension between her faith's demands for passive endurance and her passionate love for Theodora. Her rich, thrusting mezzo is perfect for As with rosy steps, while Lord to Thee each night and day is powerfully acted with both body and voice."

**Clive Paget, *Limelight***

"In the title role, fresh-voiced soprano Valda Wilson was outstanding. ...As Irene, mezzosoprano Caitlin Hulcup was her equal. Sustaining a focused sense of line and appealing tonal warmth, she persuasively conveyed her character's devotion to her faith."

**Murray Black, *The Australian***

"Caitlin Hulcup has a natural stage authority. She can command attention while simply standing still. She sang with a radiant intensity that was especially moving in Lord to Thee, in which she showed the physical and mental toll it takes to remain 'Strong in Hope' when everything seems to lead to despair."

**Ian Dickson, *Australian Book Review***

"Caitlin Hulcup has already established her reputation as a Handelian here and abroad, and her rendition of Irene's arias were



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intense and moving, with lovely golden mezzo sound."

**Sandra Bowdler, *Bachtrack* \*\*\*\***

"Irene, the female leader of the Christians in Antioch was beautifully sung by Caitlin Hulcup. She was calm and strong, her solos 'The Clouds Began to Veil' and 'Defend Her and Lord To Thee Each Night and Day' were sensational. She sang with limpid mellifluousness and was firm and inspired."

**Lynne Lancaster, *Performing Arts Hub***

### **Mahler *Symphony No. 2, Sydney Symphony Orchestra (August 2016)***

"The soloists were all of a piece with the superb playing and conducting; mezzo soprano Caitlin Hulcup sang the Urlicht movement with gorgeous plangent tone."

**Greg Keane, *Limelight* \*\*\*\*\***

"The rich acoustics of the Town Hall came into its own when mezzo soprano Caitlin Hulcup stood in the organ gallery behind the orchestra to deliver the fourth movement solo with a sound of deeply coloured expressiveness."

**Peter McCallum, *The Sydney Morning Herald* \*\*\*\*\***

"For the fourth movement Hulcup stood alongside the choir and projected effortlessly across the massive orchestra to reach the audience for the beautiful Primordial Light solo."

**Steve Moffatt, *Daily Telegraph***

### **Mozart *Idomeneo (Idamante), Garsington Opera (June 2016)***

"One of the most convincing trouser-role performances I've ever witnessed on an opera stage – from mezzo Caitlin Hulcup... Hulcup's flawless visual transformation into a lithe, agile passionate young man – combined with heartfelt singing – stole the show."

**Michael White, *Opera Now***

"It's all rather gloriously sung ... by Caitlin Hulcup, by now a trouser-role specialist, as a boyish Idamante."

**Hugh Canning, *Sunday Times***

"Idamante is one of those roles where the casting seldom pleases everyone, but Garsington gets it right for us, with the superb mezzo Caitlin Hulcup, who can add this debut to her rapidly growing list of triumphs. She looks absolutely convincing as a young prince, and plays the part of the king's son with such assurance that it's sometimes hard to remember that this is actually a girl. Her singing is truly Mozartean, with finely nuanced phrasing even in such small moments as 'O dolce nome!' and attention given to the subtleties of the arias, which are sung with exceptional beauty of tone and dramatic commitment."

**Melanie Eskenazi, *musicOMH* (4.5 stars)**

"Caitlin Hulcup's Idamante, all adolescent awkwardness and intensity, overflows with ardour for his beloved Ilia, reciprocated with shy delight by Louise Alder. Dramatically it's a near-perfect pairing, finding the youth and even the silliness in two lovers whose sophistication is only a veneer painted on by suffering. Vocally, too, from Hulcup's impassioned 'Non ho colpa' to Alder's 'Zeffiretti lusinghieri'..."

**Alexandra Coghlan, *The Spectator***

"The voices of Louise Alder (Ilia) and Caitlin Hulcup (Idamante) play off each other with graceful intensity."

**Michael Church, *The Independent* (4 stars)**

"Caitlin Hulcup cut an unusually convincing boyish figure as Idamante..."

**Hugo Shirley, *Opera Magazine***

"The singing is exceptionally strong, and the three female leads are superb. The portrayals of Louise Alder as Ilia, Caitlin Hulcup as Idamante and Rebecca von Lipinski as Elettra are all characterised by a purity of line. ... It is the impeccable shaping of Hulcup's phrasing that makes hers the standout performance; there are various opinions on whether the castrato role of Idamante (in the original version) is best served by a mezzo today, but surely no-one listening to Hulcup would want to hear anyone else."

**Sam Smith, *Classical Source* (4 stars)**

"Louise Alder and Caitlin Hulcup are hugely appealing as the young lovers, Ilia and Idamante, and their love duet in Act 3 is one of the most glorious moments in the entire opera, wonderfully joyful and life-affirming."

**Tim Hughes, *Oxford Times***

"As his son Idamante, Caitlin Hulcup ... was dramatically convincing as the frock-coated young lover."

**Flora Willson, *The Guardian***

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"... Caitlin Hulcup's youthful, humble and charming Idamante, beautifully voiced and played with affecting innocence and nicely masculine body language."  
**Charlotte Valori, *bachtrack***

"Caitlin Hulcup, a mezzo-soprano Idamante, added boyish ardour."  
**Rebecca Franks, *The Times* (4 stars)**

"Mezzo-soprano Caitlin Hulcup as Idamante looks for all the world like a young Toby Spence, and has a lovely swaggering lower register in this trouser role."  
**Claudia Pritchard, *CultureWhisper* (5 stars)**

"Caitlin Hulcup is vocally eloquent and convincingly male as his son Idamante."  
**George Hall, *The Stage* (4 stars)**

"... Idamante (world-class mezzo Caitlin Hulcup, convincingly boyish)... Add to the mix the lustrous Hulcup as Idamante, a mezzo Idamante who's already succeeding as Strauss's Octavian around the world, and you're in for the best sung performance of Mozart's first great ensemble, the stricken Act Three Quartet, that may ever have been heard in an opera house: voices are perfectly blended, the action tellingly set across the rift that's opened up in the wooden stage since the devastation."  
**David Nice, *The Arts Desk***

"The political and romantic plights of the three central characters (Idomeneo, Idamante, and Ilia) are brought out with musical acuity and idiosyncrasy by their respective singers... Caitlin Hulcup was eloquently expressive in [Idamante's] part as he comes to acknowledge his love for the Trojan princess Ilia. Hulcup realized the trouser role convincingly."  
**Curtis Rogers, *Seen and Heard International***

"Caitlin Hulcup made a similarly youthful Idamante, creating a believable 20-something prince in a performance which required little or no suspension of disbelief. Her singing was equally impressive and profoundly moving as she imbued the vocal lines with a lyrical passion which combined intensity with elegance. This was an aristocratic but still passionate young man. The long sequence where Idomeneo and Idamante are at odds (because Idomeneo cannot admit to Idamante that he is to be the sacrifice) was finely done in the way both artists sustained the tension. Spence and Hulcup ensured that it was this father/son relationship which was at the centre of the whole opera. ... The scenes between Alder and Hulcup fairly crackled, and their handling of the recitatives was impressive."  
**Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill* (4.5 stars)**

"Spence is matched by the haloed mezzo of Caitlin Hulcup as Idamante, not only plausibly masculine but dynamic of movement and fleet of tone..."  
**Mark Valencia, *WhatsOnStage* (4 stars)**

### Handel *Ariodante* (title role), Scottish Opera (February 2016)

"The beauty of Scottish Opera's adroitly cast and meticulously directed *Ariodante* is the steady darkening of mood towards Act III, where Hulcup delivers a blistering *Cieca notte*." - **Anna Picard, *The Times* \*\*\*\*\***

"Australian mezzo Caitlin Hulcup is convincingly boyish and baffled in the title role, a young lover mistakenly convinced he's been wronged, with a broad vocal range (and particularly resonant lower notes) and a remarkably expressive performance of "*Scherza infida*", probably the production's standout aria." - **David Kettle, *The Arts Desk* \*\*\*\*\***

"There are fine performances ..., not least Hulcup's anguished *Ariodante*." - **Mark Brown, *The Telegraph* \*\*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup's *Ariodante* - in a role originally conceived for male castrato - is one built on stoical virtue, her velvety nuances a glowing enrichment of the writing's surface virtuosity." - **Ken Walton, *The Scotsman***

"Caitlin Hulcup's *Ariodante* is a glorious combination of goodness, naivety and resilience, sung with penetrating warmth."  
- **Kenneth Walton, *Opera Now* \*\*\*\*\***

"This is an opera completely driven by brilliant singing. Caitlin Hulcup completely owns the title role. She looked dashing as the young *Ariodante* (a soldier, in this production) and took the audience deftly through a rollercoaster of emotions. Her "*Scherza infida*", which came shortly before the interval in this production, was pure, heart wrenching sadness. Sung from an awkward crouching position, the sheer knots of grief that betrayal can engender were laid out before us. It was pure, it was sad and it was lovely. Later on, Miss Hulcup gave an astonishingly virtuoso performance of "*Dopo notte*" - precise, joyful and exquisitely sung. It was all the more remarkable, coming towards the end of quite a long evening of singing."  
- **Kelvin Holdsworth, *Opera Britannica* \*\*\*\*\***

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"[Hulcup's] well-centred, soprano-ish timbre is pleasing on the ear and she has all the right musical instincts. Her stylish decorative command was much in evidence here, but she also respected the essential simplicity of 'Scherza infida'. 'Dopo notte' was, rightly, the crown of the evening, giving us an adrenaline-fuelled, spirit-of-the-moment sense of a singer at the top of her game, relishing the challenges Handel sets and traversing them with aplomb. Add to this Hulcup's dramatic antennae – dignity, deportment, demonstrable stage presence..." – **Andrew Clark, Opera**

"Scottish Opera has assembled a uniformly strong cast for this production, which is very finely sung. Caitlin Hulcup's convincingly boyish Ariodante was a study in anguish, her "Scherza infida" heart wrenching, full of melancholy as the blizzards raged outside and a mournful bassoon in the pit amplified the sadness. Even at the end of a long evening, her joyful "Dopo notte" was a tour de force, nailing top notes and tricky runs thrillingly." - **David Smythe, bachtrack \*\*\*\*\***

"Mezzo-soprano Caitlin Hulcup is a superb Ariodante, with flawless agility and a brassy timbre, which is reminiscent of the colour of one Lorraine Hunt-Lieberson. As an actress she gives a startling credibility to this trouser role. One can sense the painstaking work in order to adopt a masculine body language: it is virtually deceiving. The staging prefers the broken man to the outraged hero: her "Scherza infida" is a great moment, perhaps also because, within minutes, pit and stage seem to become one." - **Clémence Faber, bachtrack.fr**

"Enjoy yourself," sings a caustic Ariodante in this darkest of baroque operas. Violins ripple under the melody, and a quiet bassoon steps in where the voice chokes up. The aria is Scherza infida – music that carries profound hurt via pretty simple means, but a total synergy between singer and pit. It's Handel at his most brilliant. Caitlin Hulcup sings well in Scottish Opera's new production: her Ariodante is baffled, callow, subtle. - **Kate Molleson, The Guardian**

## Iphigénie en Tauride (Iphigénie), Pinchgut Live (released Dec. 2015)

"All the singers impress, musically and dramatically... [Hulcup's] high mezzo, enfolding deeper, grander colourings, and sense of vulnerability are well-nigh ideal for the title-role. ... She is magnificent in the heroic anguish of her Act 3 aria." **Richard Wigmore, Gramophone**

"Caitlin Hulcup, who is moving in her grief and touching in her tenderness for the two captured Greeks..." **Brian Robins, Opera**

"Without question, [Dame Janet] Baker was the most celebrated Gluck interpreter of her generation, and it is Baker whose vocal prowess and acumen as an actress that mezzo-soprano Caitlin Hulcup's singing of Iphigénie in this performance often recalls. Accomplished in a repertory spanning multiple centuries of musical invention, Hulcup finds in Gluck's long-suffering Iphigénie a rôle that might have been written with her individual gifts in mind. Like Baker, she grants music and text equal importance, maximizing the communicative capacities of Iphigénie's strenuous vocal lines. The unimpeachable security of her repeated ascents to G at the top of the stave in 'Grands Dieux! soyez-nous secourables' in Act One illustrates the level of excellence that Hulcup achieves in this music. Her 'Ô race de Pélopes! race toujours fatale!' is fiery but sophisticated, Iphigénie's aristocratic demeanor always apparent. ... The mezzo-soprano's portrayal of the troubled Iphigénie gains further dimension in Act Two, not least with her subtle singing of the recitative 'Je vois toute l'horreur que ma présence vous inspire' and her penetrating 'Ô Ciel! de mes tourments la cause et le témoin.' The Classical poise of her voicing of the pained Cantabile con espressione 'Ô malheureuse Iphigénie' is a credit to herself and to Gluck, ... compellingly conveying the character's despair and desperation. The recitative 'Je cède à vos désirs' and Larghetto cantabile air 'D'une image, hélas! trop chérie' in Act Three are delivered with abundant tonal beauty, and Hulcup reaches dizzying heights of tragic expression in the trio with Oreste and Pylade. Her performance of 'Je pourrais du tyran tromper la barbarie' alone qualifies her as world-class Iphigénie, but she crowns her interpretation with particularly fine, fearless sing in Act Four. The top As in the recitative 'Non, cet affreux devoir je ne puis le remplir' display increased freedom, and she suffuses 'Ah! laissons là ce souvenir funeste' with sounds befitting the daughter of a



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# Caitlin Hulcup

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royal house. Not long after singing Iphigénie in Sydney, Hulcup expanded her Gluckian résumé with a much-appreciated portrayal of the titular troubadour in Orfeo ed Euridice for Scottish Opera. Singers with special affinities for Gluck's music are rare, but even among their sparse company Hulcup is exceptional. A worthy rival to Callas, Jurinac, and Goerke, hers is as well-sung an Iphigénie as has been heard in the modern age." **Joseph Newsome, *Voix des Artes (Best Opera Recording of 2015)***

"Enthused by [the opera's] opening, I became even more engaged upon hearing the first notes from the eponymous protagonist, Caitlin Hulcup. She is up against the strongest possible competition from other singers able to bridge the soprano-mezzo gap, with superb recordings from singers like Callas, ..., Régine Crespin, Sena Jurinac, Rita Gorr, Marilyn Horne, ... Carol Vaness and Susan Graham... Hulcup may hold her head high in such exalted company; she has a big, warm, rich mezzo with a lovely fluting timbre. Her vocalism is thrilling, flawless and frequently reminiscent of her distinguished senior compatriot, now retired, Yvonne Minton; her singing of "O malheureuse Iphigénie" is a highlight.... Hulcup's Iphigénie is something to hear and hear again. I look forward to encountering her voice in future performances and recordings." **Ralph Moore, *MusicWeb International***

"The youthful Australian quartet of principals sings Gluck's perilously unadorned phrases with unstinted involvement and, in the case of the warm, unstrained high mezzo Caitlin Hulcup in the title role, a remarkable degree of technical confidence. This [recording] is alive from start to finish." **Max Loppert, *BBC Music Magazine* \*\*\*\*\***

### **Rossi Orpheus (Aristeus), The Royal Opera at Shakespeare's Globe (October 2015)**

"But the evening's most distinguished performance came from the Australian mezzo-soprano Caitlin Hulcup as Orpheus' rival Aristaeus (another castrato role): his-her mad scene after Eurydice's death brought an otherwise absent note of emotional urgency to the proceedings and momentarily made me feel that the opera had something sincere to communicate." **- Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph***

"Caitlin Hulcup's magnificently intense mad scene as Aristaeus ... these are the standouts but there are no weak links." **- Richard Morrison, *The Times* \*\*\*\*\***

"No weak links here, and some outstanding performances: by Caitlin Hulcup as a deranged Aristeus (stylishly evoking a castrato sound)..." **- Michael Church, *The Independent* \*\*\*\*\***

"Caitlin Hulcup wrung the humour and tragedy out of Aristaeus, Orpheus's rival." **- Hannah Nepil, *Financial Times* \*\*\*\*\***

"The other castrato role is that of Aristeus, from which Caitlin Hulcup extracts all the dramatic and musical juice..." **- Andrew Clements, *The Guardian* \*\*\*\*\***

"The dramatic momentum is unflagging, but the darker emotional recesses are explored too, not least in Aristeus's harrowing mad scene (movingly delivered by Caitlin Hulcup), in which the unfortunate spurned lover hallucinates about himself and others, embarking on an extraordinary range of musical styles and psychological states." **- Barry Millington, *Evening Standard* \*\*\*\*\***

"As that hapless would-be lover, Caitlin Hulcup showered warm mezzo riches on us at thrilling close quarters." **- David Nice, *The Arts Desk* \*\*\*\*\***

"We were treated to some truly lovely arias from Stagg's Orpheus, Alder's Eurydice and Caitlin Hulcup as Aristaeus - having

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# Caitlin Hulcup

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spent most of the previous two Acts being downtrodden and risible, Hulcup seized her chance to project some real pathos. ..."  
- **David Karlin, *bachtrack***

"All Rossi's castrato roles are sung by women and every one of them is a gem. Caitlin Hulcup is a fiery, passionate Aristeus."  
- **Mark Valencia, *WhatsOnStage***

"There are memorable individual contributions ... especially Caitlin Hulcup's Aristaeus." - **George Hall, *The Stage***

### **Mahler *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, Sydney Symphony Orchestra (May 2015)**

"Hulcup was enchanting in the failed flirtation, Verlor'n'ne Muh... Hulcup's voice is rounded with deep warmth and richly focus, and without a hint of excessive vibrato. In *Urlicht*, (which Mahler appropriated as the fourth movement of his Second Symphony) she shaped each phrase like glowing light." - **Peter McCallum, *Sydney Morning Herald***

### **Gluck *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Orfeo), Scottish Opera (February 2015)**

"... there's fine singing to enjoy. The Australian mezzo Caitlin Hulcup has impressed me for years with her rich, full and distinctive timbre, and she sings Orfeo with commendable intensity given the triteness of what is around her. ... Her flaming row with Lucy Hall's plangently sung Euridice — distraught and baffled by Orfeo's coldness — is the emotional centre of the show."  
- **Richard Morrison, *The Times***

"[Director Ashley] Page gets conflicted, emotionally wrenching performances from Caitlin Hulcup's Orfeo."  
- **Hugh Canning, *Sunday Times***

"Caitlin Hulcup's willowy, white-suited Orfeo sounded more 'operatic' than the period specialists that are generally preferred for this role, and the performance was all the better for it: she projected well, showcasing a surprisingly voluptuous chest register and subsuming all her vocal decorations within the musical line. She's a good actor." - **Andrew Clark, *Opera***

"This was a particularly well sung opera with Caitlin Hulcup's honey-toned mezzo bringing a noble passion to the trouser role of Orfeo. Dressed in a cream three piece linen suit and silk scarf, she was centre of attention and her well-choreographed journey back from the Underworld with a now quarrelsome Euridice in tow was a particular highlight. We had to wait until the end to hear the famous aria "Che farò senza Euridice" simply delivered against stage black, melting the heart of Amore and us in the audience too." - **David Smythe, *bachtrack***

"...given a send-off by a stylish group of mourners that is as eloquent physically as Caitlin Hulcup's Orfeo is musically. ... With the sparest of design, there is never any doubt where we are, and Hulcup and Hall make the most of their roles, particularly in the dark comedy of the crucial scene as he attempts to lead her back." - **Keith Bruce, *The Herald***

"Caitlin Hulcup's Orfeo is sung with rich masculinity." - **Ken Walton, *The Scotsman***

"Performing in the star role as Orfeo is Australian opera singer Caitlin Hulcup, [who has] extremely good Italian pronunciation and [a] highly expressive voice... Hulcup, in particular, displays real control and musical verve and has a powerful and commanding stage presence, and ought to be congratulated on her apparent musical mastery of this challenging and demanding role." - **S. E. Webster, *The Public Reviews***

"But it is Orfeo who carries the opera - rarely off-stage and, most of the time, singing of his grief. Caitlin Hulcup is androgynous as the lead singer in a boy-band, in white three-piece suit and silk scarf, a look which works with her mezzo voice. It is rich and expressive, and utterly convincing, as the hapless Orfeo tries to cope with grief, obstructive Lost Souls and Furies, importuning wife and grief again." - **Catriona Graham, *The Opera Critic***

"Caitlin Hulcup ... provide[d] a genuinely moving interpretation of the title role. Her range was extremely impressive, penetrating at the top and characterful at the bottom, using the whole span of her voice to inhabit the character's emotions and problems, particularly impressive in the scene where she tamed the Furies." - **Simon Thompson, *Seen and Heard International***

"The lead in this Scottish Opera production is ably filled by Caitlin Hulcup." - **John McLellan, *Edinburgh News***

"Caitlin Hulcup, pure heroism in an all-white suit, is particularly charismatic." - **Alan Morrison, *Sunday Herald***

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# Caitlin Hulcup

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### Gluck *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Iphigénie), Pinchgut Opera, Sydney (December 2014)

"As Iphigénie, mezzo soprano Caitlin Hulcup is quite remarkable. A woman on the verge, indeed, but every gesture of voice and body is eloquent and controlled. Her instrument is a pure stream of liquid silver, flowing in the arias, nuanced in the crucial Gluckian recitative. And her portrayal of poor Iphigénie, almost crushed beyond hope, and yet hanging in there by that shred of humanity that somehow manages to keep so many of us going, is an agony that we, the spectators, willingly become a part of. *O malheureuses Iphigénie* is heart-rending, ... powerfully sung and staged." –**Clive Paget, *Limelight***

"As for the title role, Caitlin Hulcup carries this immense part with unfailing intensity, maintaining a purity of tone and fleetness of phrasing throughout the most turbulent of arias." –**Harriet Cunningham, *The Sydney Morning Herald***

"As Iphigenie, Australian mezzo soprano Caitlin Hulcup sustained remarkable clarity and focus in her tour de force performance. Firm and secure across her tessitura, she displayed excellent dynamic control, impressive timbral variety and an alluring range of tone colours." –**Murray Black, *The Australian***

"A sense of anguish pours from Caitlin Hulcup's grand performance as Iphigénie, vocally typified by glorious, emotive phrasing, a warm, even vibrato and demonstrative wide-ranging tonal colour. Hulcup fires from the start, maintaining her vigour in Act II's mournful and piercing *O malheureuse Iphigénie*. Then, as if dabbing paint to music, Hulcup renders Act III's *Je cède à vos désirs: du sort qui nous opprime* with a fierce delicacy as she agonises over her strange desire to free Oreste in feeling a mysterious bond." –**Paul Selar, *bachtrack***

"As Iphigenie, Caitlin Hulcup is superb. Stern and refined as the priestess she hides a compassionate heart. She sings divinely and is in glorious form with a warm tone. She is always conscious of the phrasing and shaping of the vocal line and very dramatically moving and convincing." –**Lynne Lancaster, *Performing Arts Hub***

"In the title role, Caitlin Hulcup sings with a beautifully warm, full and focused tone, ever attentive to the possibilities of phrasing and shaping the vocal line, and is consistently dramatically convincing and moving." –**Michael Halliwell, *The Conversation***

"The title role is huge, and Caitlin Hulcup's performance of it was a true tour de force. She understood every nuance of the emotional fabric of the music. Her voice, mercurially capable of moving seamlessly from deep plangency to tender warmth, and indeed between an array of different feelings, was always true and vibrant, and always true to Gluck's ideals; at the service of the drama. The arias in the opera are models of concision, [and] ... she has scenas which, though never flashy, demand a very special range of techniques to bring off. Caitlin Hulcup was mistress of them all." –**Nicholas Routley, *Australian Stage***

"Caitlin Hulcup is ideal in the title role: her poise, dignity, and beauty in form and voice yield great empathy." –**Jason Catlett, *Sinfini Music***

### Rossini *Maometto secondo* (Calbo), Garsington Opera, Avie AV2312

"Caitlin Hulcup as Anna's Venetian fiancé...makes [a] sterling contributions." –**Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph***

"[Caitlin Hulcup] becomes in some ways the most interesting person – character developed through sheer *bel canto* technique." –**Robert Thicknesse, *Opera Now***

"The Australian mezzo Caitlin Hulcup is Calbo...Hulcup should please listeners with her *fiortura*. For a mezzo whose compact voice is not the largest imaginable, she runs the range of that aria with no sign of difficulty and finds the low notes for the line 'basso affetto nel mio petto', eliciting at the end of the aria a well-reserved outburst of enthusiasm. She blends well in the trios." –**John T. Hughes, *International Record Review***

"In her performance as the Venetian general Calbo, Australian mezzo-soprano Caitlin Hulcup fires volley after volley of blazing coloratura, seeming a fusion of Conchita Supervia and Marilyn Horne in their primes. Ms. Hulcup's voice combines a robustness of timbre that enables her to credibly portray male characters with a bravura technique that firmly places her in the ranks of

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# Caitlin Hulcup

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today's best Rossini singers. Ms. Hulcup sings her lines in the terzettone 'Ohimè! Qual fulmine' in Act One—Rossini's emblematic 'big fat trio'—with stunning immediacy, her characterization of Calbo demanding the listener's sympathy. In Act Two, her performance of the fervent aria 'Non temer' is shaped by dramatic intensity tempered by absolute mastery of *bel canto* technique. The peak of Ms. Hulcup's performance is reached in the terzettino with Anna and Erisso in Act Two, 'In questi estremi istanti,' in which she unleashes the full power and poetry of her artistry. There are passages at the bottom and top of Calbo's music that challenge Ms. Hulcup, but she copes with every requirement of her rôle with the confidence of a marathon runner who has the finish line in sight. Poor Calbo can get lost among the high-flying, frenzied exchanges between Anna and Erisso: Ms. Hulcup ensures that her character remains at the center of the drama from first note to last." – **Joseph Newsome, *Voix des Arts***

### **Mahler Symphony No.8, RSNO (Oundijan), Usher Hall, Edinburgh (May 2014)**

"Australian Caitlin Hulcup's delicious mezzo oozed glorious warmth." – **David Smythe, *bachtrack***

### **Rossini *Maometto secondo* (Calbo), Garsington Opera (June 2013)**

"Caitlin Hulcup, in the trouser role of Calbo, brings the house down with her prison aria." – **Andrew Clark, *Financial Times***

"The young American soprano Siân Davies is also compelling as the anguished, finally self-sacrificing daughter Anna: a soft-grained yet resonant voice with sensational agility and fine expressive powers. So, too, is Caitlin Hulcup, who relishes hair-raising two-octave leaps as her spurned but loyal suitor Calbo." – **Richard Morrison, *The Times***

"Hulcup delivers her trouser-role with none of the usual irritating faux-masculine mannerisms, and with an artistry to take the breath away. She negotiates the most awkward leaps as if nothing could be more natural; she has distinctly different voices at the top and bottom of her register, but moves between them with seamless ease." – **Michael Church, *The Independent***

"Perhaps the finest aria of the evening came from mezzo Caitlin Hulcup in the trouser role of Anna's suitor Calbo. She sang the Act II "Non temer: d'un basso affetto" with vivid colours and heart-melting grace and nobility. Calbo is exhorting Erisso to understand that his daughter (whom he knows once loved Maometto) cannot possibly have been faithless; there can hardly have been a dry eye in the house." – **David Karlin, *bachtrack***

"The man she ends up marrying (Calbo) was sung by Australian mezzo Caitlin Hulcup, and she's a scene-stealer! Defiant against all the odds, the approaching Turks, Hulcup sang with tenderness and with rousing calls-to-arms." – **Kevin Rogers, *Classical Source***

"Caitlin Hulcup's Calbo, however, was outstanding. She has a remarkably flexible voice, particularly lustrous in the lower register, so the extreme range in the part elides gracefully. She also moves with energy, not always a given in trouser roles. She's very experienced. As I listened, I remembered hearing her before as Arbaces in Thomas Arne's *Artaxerxes* at the Royal Opera House." – **Anne Ozorio, *Opera Today***

"Caitlin Hulcup sings energetically in the trouser role of the Venetian general Calbo."

– **George Loomis, *New York Times***

### **Mozart *Don Giovanni* (Elvira), Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (February 2013)**

"Australian Caitlin Hulcup, who was a first-class Octavian for the inauguration of last year's Festival, returned as Elvira and was again in lovely voice, performing with tremendous rhythmic fervour. [...] She flung herself through the cadenzas with extraordinary purpose, signalling at once the vulnerability and tenacity of the character. In a few words, her vocal vibrancy and dramatic commitment suggested a passion that seemed indubitably Spanish and youthful." – **Nicola Lischi, *Opera Britannia***