
James Way

Selected Reviews

CD: Britten Canticles

Delphian DCD34340 (Mar 2025)

James Way, Natalie Burch, Lotte Betts Dean, Hugh Cutting, Ross Ramgobin, Annemarie Federle, Alis Huws.

[Way is] never less than eloquent, and blends wonderfully with the mezzo-soprano Lotte Betts-Dean as the voice of God in Abraham and Isaac...The most brilliant turn of all comes from Way alone, singing Priaux Rainier's starkly powerful Cycle for Declamation from 1954. A fascinating and rewarding release. **- The Times**

Way demonstrates exceptional control of phrasing and dynamics, particularly in the softer passages where his nuanced delivery creates moments of profound beauty. **- Andrew Palmer, Yorkshire Times**

HAYDN The Creation

CBSO (Feb 2025)

As the Archangel Uriel the tenor is mostly confined to narration and scene setting but James Way did so elegantly, in ringing pure voice - **Norman Stinchcombe, Midlands Music Reviews**

STANFORD Requiem

National Symphony Orchestra (Nov 2024)

Tenor James Way delivered the Lux aeterna of the Agnus Dei with a silky smooth lyricism, his voice blending beautifully with bass John Molloy **- Andrew Larkin, BachTrack**

BRITTEN 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' (Flute)

Garsington Opera (Jun/Jul 2024)

There are other highly commendable performances in this cast, notably James Way as the cross-dressing Flute, who came closer than anyone to achieving a genuine comic effect as well as having a fine voice. – Simon Heffer, The Telegraph

James Way's Flute, expiring in an extravagant red ballgown, plucks the heartstrings as the dying Thisbe. **– Neil Fisher, The Times**

there are delightful cameos from James Way's Flute, a true prima donna in Thisbe's flowing red ballgown **– Richard Fairman, Financial Times**

MONTIVERDI 'Selva morale et spirituale'

Les Arts Florissants (Apr 2024)

Way's voice is clear, well-balanced and well-structured

Lara Othman, Olyrix

BENJAMIN Lessons in Love and Violence

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Orchestre de Paris (October 2023)

La clarté du chant de James Way et son physique juvénile donnent un crédit certain au personnage du Garçon et futur Jeune Roi, le jeune ténor maîtrisant parfaitement le passage en voix mixte exigé par endroits.

The clarity of James Way's singing and his youthful physique give certain credit to the character of the Boy and future Young King, the young tenor perfectly mastering the passage into mixed voice required in places.

Sonia Hossein-Pour, *Forum Opera*

La silhouette fragile de James Way ainsi que sa voix, ronde et juvénile, avec des aigus très clairs, conviennent parfaitement à l'innocence du Jeune Roi : tout comme son chant très naturel, qui surprend d'autant plus quand le personnage se révèle à son tour capable de cruauté.

The fragile silhouette of James Way as well as his voice, round and youthful, with very clear high notes, suit perfectly the innocence of the Young King: just like his very natural singing, which surprises all the more when the character reveals himself to his turn capable of cruelty.

Olyrix

Le ténor du jeune Roi/James Way, mis en valeur dans une dernière scène suffocante, n'en est pas moins rayonnant, d'une grande clarté d'élocution, dont le registre flirte avec celui du contre-ténor.

The tenor of the young King/James Way, highlighted in a last suffocating scene, is no less radiant, with great clarity of speech, whose register flirts with that of the countertenor.

Michèle Tosi, *ResMusica*

Le rôle du fils du Roi est admirablement incarné par James Way. L'innocence juvénile du personnage est soutenue par des aigus magnifiquement ronds et purs, à l'instar d'un Evangéliste dans une Passion de Bach. À la fin de l'ouvrage, cette voix semble se corrompre, chargée d'un grain de voix nouveau, jusqu'à la tirade finale, où le ténor expose la vengeance de son père d'une autorité sententielle, sans pitié.

The role of the King's son is admirably played by James Way. The character's youthful innocence is supported by magnificently round and pure high notes, like an Evangelist in a Bach Passion. At the end of the work, this voice seems to corrupt, loaded with a new grain of voice, until the final tirade, where the tenor exposes his father's revenge with a sentential, merciless authority.

Nicolas Mathieu, *Première Loge Opera*

L'autre ténor, le fils du roi, est chanté par James Way, voix claire qui impressionne par sa maîtrise totale lors de sa dernière déclaration quand il reçoit la couronne après cette cruelle leçon d'amour et de violence.

The other tenor, the king's son, is sung by James Way, a clear voice which impresses with its total mastery during his last declaration when he receives the crown after this cruel lesson in love and violence.

Helene Adam, *Cult.News*

PURCELL King Arthur

Early Opera Company (September 2023)

If there is a more rousing rendition of 'Come if you dare' than Way's, I have yet to hear it.

Eric McElroy, *Opera Today*

BRITTEN A Midsummer Night's Dream (Flute)

Glyndebourne (July/August 2023)

The tenor James Way (Flute) and basses Patrick Guetti (Snug) and Henry Waddington (Quince) stood out among his partners

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HANDEL Solomon (Zadok)
English Concert, US and European tour (March 2023)

Roger Parker, *Opera Magazine*

In this performance by the open, frank voice of tenor James Way [...] one felt one's scepticism dropping away.

Ivan Hewett, *The Telegraph*

It was set alight here in the very first aria by the tenor James Way, whose delivery, combining animation and nuance, is that of a true Handelian.

Barry Millington, *The Evening Standard*

[The] superlative James Way (Zadok), another one in that endless quarry of magnificent baroque tenors that is the United Kingdom. Way was, without a doubt, the soloist who stood out the most, especially in the third act aria *Golden columns, fair and bright*, in which the priest Zadok extols the greatness and beauty of the temple ordered to be erected by Solomon.

(translated from Spanish)

Eduardo Torrico, *Scherzo*

The role was elegantly performed by tenor James Way.

Nicholas Jones, *San Francisco Classical Voice*

Only the tenor role of Zadok the Priest is heavy on ornamentation, handled gamely [...] on Sunday by James Way.

Zachary Woolfe, *New York Times*

HANDEL Acis & Galatea (Damon)
London Handel Festival with La Nuova Musica (April 2022)

James Way brought a welcome element of vocal drama to his two arias and managed to really engage us even though the dramatic lighting meant that his face was well-nigh invisible.

Robert Hugill, *Opera Today*

HANDEL L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato
Les Arts Florissants, European Tour (March 2022)

None was livelier than the tenor James Way. Usually presenting the cheerful point of view, he put his bright mark on every note and syllable, even when the syllables formed phrases such as "Stygian", "Cerberus", or "Jonson's learned sock".

Geoff Brown, *The Times*

...a team of outstanding soloists...

Barry Millington, *Evening Standard*

Tenor James Way was a strong presence throughout, singing with good tone, a relish for the text, and an athletic coloratura. In "Haste thee, nymph", he sang its final line of "laughter holding both his sides", which Handel sets as "ho-ho-ho-ho-holding", with shoulder-shaking jollity.

Roy Westbrook, *bachtrack*

L'Anglais James Way, de son côté, souligne l'importance du Jardin des Voix, qui dit-il « est indubitablement un programme qui

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alimente la passion d'interpréter la musique baroque ». Et cela se sent, autant dans sa manière de projeter le son que dans son articulation parfaite. Bref, un interprète qui a trouvé sa voie aussi bien dans ce genre musical que dans Bach et Britten, aussi à l'aise dans l'humour que dans le sentiment.

The Englishman James Way, for his part, stresses the importance of the Garden of Voices, which he says "is undoubtedly a program that feeds the passion to interpret baroque music". And this is felt, as much in his way of projecting the sound as in his perfect articulation. In short, a performer who has found his way as well in this musical genre as in Bach and Britten, as comfortable in humor as in feeling.

Jean-Marcel Humbert, *Forum Opera*

HANDEL L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato Les Arts Florissants, European Tour (December 2021)

Handel wrote colorful songs for the tenor, which James Way played with sharp articulation.

Franz Straatman, *Opera Magazine.nl*

You and the tenor should laugh - also true to the premiere - to the aria "Haste thee, nymph" L'Allegros, in which it actually shook you heartily, just like James Way, with the playful, relaxed, fluid and mischievous lightness of being. Also contagious is his mischievous, clear, winning laissez-faire, which adapts to all counter-arguments, and his dictated, playful plunge into pleasure, to which the choir with its casual or festively strengthened savoir *chanter* jumped.

Jens Klier, *Bachtrack*

Among newcomers, the tenor James Way has a powerful and well-placed organ, and above all an extremely clear and precise diction, thanks to which one does not lose a word of the text.

Pierre Degott, *ResMusica*

BRITTEN Owen Wingrave (Lechmere) Grange Park Opera – film (December 2020)

Tenor James Way shines youthfully as Owen's friend Lechmere.

Mark Valencia, *Bachtrack*

James Way offers an innocent rather than brutish Lechmere, honeyed and boyish in tone

Benjamin Poore, *Opera Wire*

... here [James Way's] ardent tenor is just right for Lechmere's impetuosity and over-enthusiasm, and he captures, too, both the immaturity and remorse that Lechmere displays in Act 2

Claire Seymour, *Opera Today*

HANDEL Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno Opéra Orchestre National de Montpellier (February 2020)

James Way demonstrates expressive qualities in the role of Tempo and vocalises with ease ...

Laurent Bury, *Forum Opera*

James Way is a bright Tempo ... completely legitimate and convincing. The voice is very well carried and integrates easily with the whole.

Elodie Martinez, *Opera Online*

James Way's Tempo is distinguished by a gallant clarity.

Gilles Charlassier, *Toute La Culture*

HANDEL Messiah

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Freiburg Baroque Orchestra tour (December 2019)

The young tenor James Way ... in turn tender, hushed and valiant.

Julian Sykes, *Le Temps*

Tenor James Way offered bravura passagework in a defiant and crisp 'Thou Shalt Break Them', and ... impressive mesa di voce in 'Comfort ye'.

Benjamin Poore, *Music OMH*

PURCELL King Arthur Gabieli Consort (October 2019)

Among the highlights [is] James Way's How Blest Are Shepherds ...

Hugh Canning, *The Times*

HANDEL Messiah Les Arts Florissants (October 2019)

Deliciously sung by James Way, the first aria 'Ev'ry valley shall be exalted' perfectly combines power and vocal transparency, with ... intimate pianissimo. The aria 'Thou shalt break them' demonstrates stunning vocal precision, and the duet with counter-tenor 'O death, where is thy sting' ... presents subtle and elegant phrasing.

Augustin Javel, *Bachtrack*

STRAVINSKY The Rake's Progress (Sellem) Aldeburgh Festival (September 2019)

[...] James Way, who seems to have surveyed the show and thought 'Hmm...I reckon I can steal this' – then proceeded to do so as the auctioneer Sellem by stirring dollops of knowing humour into a precise vocal focus. He was a magnetic presence.

Mark Valencia, *Opera Magazine*

STRAVINSKY The Rake's Progress Ojai Music Festival (June 2019)

With a natural command of the stage, James Way, a tenor with a delicate voice, was a consistent scene stealer. As the auctioneer Sellem in *The Rake's Progress*, his mania was skillfully vaudevillian; similarly eccentric were his Noël Coward-esque segments of *Façade*. When he returned, in the final concert, in Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*, his voice was lush and nimble, balancing the sound worlds of 18th-century Pergolesi and 20th-century neoclassicism.

Joshua Barone, *The New York Times*

Of the cast we heard I would say she has picked three knockout performers... James Way as Sellem gave the auction scene more snap, crackle and pop than anyone else achieved.

Richard Morrison, *The Times*

...the humour and wit of the tenor James Way in Stravinsky's delicious Cubist-Italian-Baroque ballet *Pulcinella* was especially winning.

Ivan Hewett, *The Telegraph*

STRAVINSKY The Rake's Progress

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Klarafestival, Brussels (August 2019)

James Way as Sellem ... [was] impeccable.

Nicolas Blanmont, *Opera*

BOULANGER Du fond de l'abîme BBC Symphony Orchestra (April 2019)

Delayman also appeared with an even more heartfelt tenor, James Way, plus the sturdy BBC Symphony Chorus, in Lili's psalm setting Du fond de l'abîme.

Geoff Brown, *The Times*

HAYDN 'The Seasons' Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra (March 2019)

The powerful voice of Tenor, James Way (Lucas), became appropriately diminished in a gripping and beautifully sung narrative of the wanderer lost in snow; the chill he created almost palpable and in striking contrast with the warmth and humour of his many contributions throughout.

John Gilroy, *Cambridge Independent*

HANDEL Samson (title role) Dunedin Consort (April 2018)

This was a robust and fine performance, with tenor James Way showing a huge amount of vocal dexterity and stamina in the title role.

Miranda Heggie, *Arts desk*

HAYDN The Creation The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (January 2018)

It was the tenor James Way who took the breath away, however, with his immaculate tonal control and the astonishing maturity of his musicianship.

Barry Millington, *Evening Standard*

Tenor James Way sang with a remarkably strong virile tone, but used a nice flexibility too. His opening recitative was vivid and this continued into 'Now vanish before the holy beams', and on the Fourth Day Way's 'Let there be lights' recitative was similarly word based, the colour and details of his performance reflected in the atmospheric orchestral contributions. His final aria, 'In native worth' was full of virile phrasing and relish for the words.

Planet Hugill, *Planet Hugill*

SCHUBERT Die schöne Müllerin London Handel Festival with Nigel Foster, piano (December 2017)

A sensitive and beautiful account of Schubert's first song cycle from a talented young tenor. [...] From the outset the pianistic flow of emotional and natural currents and James Way's warm lyric tenor all wide-eyed innocence and vulnerability, were a portent of the story's tragic trajectory. Way's elegant legato, full of pathos, never lapsed into sentimentality. In this introspective reading both the finely tuned accompaniment and vocal line were poised and restrained [...] this was a sensitive and beautiful interpretation.

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Planet Hugill, *Planet Hugill*

HANDEL Jupiter, Semele The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (October 2017)

James Way sang most musically as Jupiter [...] already his tenor has a darkness of colour in the lower register that suggests a Samson or a Jephtha might be his future. His 'Where'er you walk', sung in long legato lines and with immaculate diction, was a genuine highlight. [...] Rousset's edition rightly focused on the central pair and June, but hardcore Handelians couldn't really complain given the vocal riches showered on us by Alder and Way.

Hugh Canning, *Opera Magazine*

James Way, still an OAE Rising Star, is young as Jupiters go, but rattling off virtuoso semiquavers, he displayed an astonishingly assured technique. He is also blessed with a full-bodied, attractive tone, deployed to superbly expressive effect in Where'er You Walk. His distress at losing Semele was no less affecting.

Barry Millington, *Evening Standard*

James Way's Jupiter exuded melodious warmth

Michael Church, *The Independent*

James Way a vocally chiseled Jupiter

Neil Fisher, *The Times*

James Way, an OAE Rising Star, was also excellent as Jupiter, revealing an exceptionally smooth and well-shaped tenor that sounded light and yet also projected well.

Sam Smith, *Music OMH*

James Way sang Jupiter with a surprisingly dark toned tenor which imbued the character with a nice sense implicit virility [...] his account of the work's hit number, 'Where e'er you walk' was finely done, and he made us see that Jupiter really did feel Semele's loss at the end.

Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*

ROXANNA PANUFNIK, Davy, Silver Birch Garsington Opera (July 2017)

The two older boys - Sam Furness, James Way, both excellent.

John Snelling, *The Times*

Davey, a poised James Way

Helen Wallace, *The Arts Desk*

BACH St John Passion (Evangelist) Temple Church (April 2017)

It was a confident and finely dramatic account, full of subtlety and rich drama. Way has a bright toned lyric tenor with an interesting depth to the tone, and he showed a lovely freedom in the high-lying line. The Evangelist is a big sing, and Way's pacing was impressive so the end had all the virtues of the beginning. His projection of the words was strong, and he brought out the nuances of individual moments. Clearly Way will develop as an artist, but his Evangelist is already very impressive and finely moving

Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*

Music on the Brink of Destruction

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Wigmore Hall (January 2017)

James Way's poised, intense performance of Um Mitternacht (from Ullmann's Geistliche Lieder), a song that points to the grave beauty of the final quartet of Der Kaiser von Atlantis.

Anna Piccard, *The Times*

...a lied by Viktor Ullman persuasively presented by clarion tenor, James Way...

Max Stern, *The Jerusalem Post*

BRITTEN Canticle Barbican Hall (2016)

James Way and Adam Sullivan are young tenors to watch: the former brought an artless vocal beauty to the mystic text of Francis Quarles in Canticle I.

Mark Valencia, *Classical Source*

James Way was a strong tenor, capable of superb melismas, a trait so crucial to fine Britten singing.

Colin Clarke, *Seen and Heard International*

MUSSORGSKY Holy Fool, Boris Godunov Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Festival Hall (2015)

James Way's Holy Fool wept and keened with the violas and oboes over the cries of the starving people

Hilary Finch, *The Times*

Effortlessly clear in diction and bright in tone was the other tenor James Way whose beautiful singing as the Holy Fool perfectly underlined the innocence that both Shuysky and Boris lacked.

David Truslove, *Classical Source*

BRITTEN Ballad Singer, Owen Wingrave, Aldeburgh Festival and Edinburgh International Festival (2014)

Tenor James Way's delivery of the folk ballad was ravishing.

Michael Church, *The Independent*

The excellent James Way insinuates this story into Owen's ear like Quint seducing Miles.

Mark Valencia, *What's on Stage*

Tenor James Way had [lyrical power] in plenty; ... his beautifully shaped melody complemented by the crystalline strains of off-stage choristers.

Claire Seymour, *Seen and Heard International*