
Joshua Ellicott

Selected Reviews

Handel *Messiah* (Tenor I), Dunedin Consort (December 2025)

"Both male soloists were large lyrical voices, tenor Joshua Ellicott beautifully growing the long notes in "Comfort ye", fearsome in the declamatory "Thou shalt break them" and holding back to blend with the mezzo in "O death, where is thy sting".

- David Smythe, *BachTrack*

Handel *Susanna* (First Elder), Dunedin Consort, St Martin in the Fields (January 2025)

"Ellicott was wonderfully proper in his courtly air... In Part Three, Ellicott's air of lament was wonderfully two-faced"

- Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*

MacMillan *All the Hills and Vales Along*, The Cumnock Tryst Festival (October 2024)

"Each element is deployed to bring distinctive musical colour to the war poetry of Charles Hamilton Sorley, so that the brash militaristic opening drove the brass band and chorus savagely towards the bullets, while tenor Joshua Ellicott, the Everyman soldier-observer, sang with rapt intensity against the subtle beauty of the string quintet."

- Simon Thompson, *The Times*****

From Your Ever-Loving Son Jack, Lammermuir Festival (September 2024)

"In the festival's first weekend, the tenor Joshua Ellicott brought an inventive song recital based around the letters that his great uncle Jack sent home from the First World War – letters bursting with life, rendered deeply poignant by Jack's death at the Somme in 1916. Ellicott read the letters and sang with such articulation and care as to invest every syllable with meaning, while the songs themselves were often shot through with that peculiarly British sense of restraint and were all the more moving as a consequence."

- Simon Thompson, *The Times*

"Joshua Ellicott has a remarkably focused, bright tenor which he uses with taste and musicality, taking us on an emotional journey from jollity to action and on to the aftermath of the young man's demise. The highlights from the songs were Reynaldo Hahn's *The Stars*, where the limpid piano and the ecstatic response to nature cannot help but remind you of Schubert, and the closing song, John Ireland's *Spring Sorrow*, the rather cloying sentiments of Rupert Brooke given new emphasis as atmospheric reflections of the response to the young man's death – given that his mother seems never to have accepted her son's passing, that final line "And my heart puts forth its pain" struck home with especial force."

- Melanie Eskenazi, *MusicOMH*****

"Only one tune, Haydn Wood's *Roses of Picardy*, was a familiar World War One "hit", and the recital climaxed in James MacMillan's *The Children*, setting the words of William Soutar occasioned by the later horrors of the Spanish Civil War. Both of these were highlights, the former a melodic gem, and the MacMillan a brilliant exercise in working with very few notes to create something almost unbearably haunting. Young Jack died in France in August 1916 but his great-nephew found plenty of humour in the letters he sent, not least in allusions to female rivals for his affection back in Lancashire. The music of Frank Bridge, John Ireland, and Gerard Finzi and Frenchmen Francis Poulenc, Claude Debussy and Reynaldo Hahn, not only suited but in many cases also shared the benefits of this act of remembrance."

- Keith Bruce, *The Herald******

Bach *St Matthew Passion* (Arias), The Bach Choir, Royal Festival Hall (March 2024)

"All solo singers delivered their parts with utmost professionalism but two, in particular, caught my ears: soprano Nardus Williams and tenor Joshua Ellicott used their beautiful voices for nuanced phrasing and dynamics as well dramatic storytelling."

- Agnes Kory, *Seen and Heard International*

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Handel *Messiah*, Ulster Orchestra, Waterfront Hall (December 2023)

"... tenor Joshua Ellicott... sang with sensitivity and understanding"

- **Belfast Newsletter**

Bach *St Matthew Passion* (Evangelist), Deutsche Oper Berlin (May 2023)

"Joshua Ellicott and Padraic Rowan led a first-rate vocal cast as the Evangelist and Jesus, respectively. Far from being an impassive narrator, Ellicott sang the part with full emotional involvement, his voice writhing and piercing the air as it retraced the events. In a veritable tour de force, he brought the secco recitatives to life thanks to well-designed phrasing and a strong melodic sense."

- **Elena Luporini, *Bachtrack***

"In addition, Joshua Ellicott as an evangelist, Padraic Rowan as Jesus and alto Annika Schlicht emphasise the grandiosity of the performance."

- **Martina Hafner, *Die Stimme Berlins***

Handel *Alexander's Feast*, London Handel Festival, St George's Hanover Square (February 2023)

"Joshua Ellicott, replacing an indisposed Stuart Jackson, revealed an expansive tenor and his delivery style felt quite free and easy. This proved to be highly effective for relating events, as the role requires, and the audience soon forgot just how disparate the requirements placed on his singing were because everything felt so smooth."

- **Sam Smith, *MusicOMH********

"Three fine soloists helped... Joshua Ellicott matched her [Lucy Crowe] for character."

- **Richard Morrison, *The Times*******

Handel *Jephtha* (Title role), Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart, Ludwigsburger Forum (October 2022)

"The English tenor Joshua Ellicott creates this role with a wide range of expressions, finding a moving realization of Jephthah's despair in the second and third acts in particular."

- **Markus Dippold, *Stuttgarter Zeitung***

"Tenor Joshua Ellicott performs the title role with phenomenal power of transformation... [he] envelopes his sense of mission with an abundance of sparkling crescendos and nuances."

- **Dietholf Zerweck, *Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung***

"And the solo cast was exquisite, too... Joshua Ellicott's passionate Jephtha."

- **Karl Georg Berg, *Die Rheinpfalz***

Caldara *Maddalena ai piedi di Christo* (Christ), Freiburger Barockorchester (April 2022)

"English tenor Joshua Ellicott embodies Christ with his majestic, grounded voice. Although his participation is limited to two arias, his direct and unmysterious broadcast assures him of a remarkable presence."

- **Frédérique Epin, *Olyrix***

CD: *Ursa Minor: Chamber Music by Stuart MacRae (I am Prometheus)*, Hebrides Ensemble (March 2022)

"*I am Prometheus* and *Parable* (2018 and 2013, persuasively sung by Joshua Ellicott and Marcus Farnsworth respectively) explore complex character flaws and their far-reaching consequences."

- **Steph Power, *BBC Music Magazine********

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Britten *Nocturne*, BBC SSO at the Lammermuir Festival (September 2021)

"A sprightly BBC SSO under the baton of Peter Whelan combined brilliantly with a nuanced performance from Joshua Ellicott in Britten's delicious *Nocturne* for tenor and orchestra... Focus in the *Nocturne* fell on tenor Joshua Ellicott, the unspoilt sheen of his delivery capturing the shadowy essence, but also the ecstasy and humour, of Britten's settings of verses by Shelley and Keats among others. Perfect for the opulent church acoustics."

– Ken Walton, *The Scotsman*****

Handel *Rodelinda* (Grimoaldo), The English Concert, Linn Records CKD 658 (April 2021)

"Joshua Ellicott's [...] sensitively sung scene of remorse ... Highly recommended."

– Hugh Canning, *The Sunday Times (Album of the Week April 25)*

"After his superb Samson with the Dunedin Consort (Linn, 12/19), Joshua Ellicott excels as the villainous yet weakly vacillating Grimoaldo: from the snarling fury of his opening 'lo già t'amo', egged on by spitting strings, to the drowsily softened tone of his final aria as Grimoaldo sings himself to sleep. ... this new recording, more subtly directed and more consistently sung, now becomes my top recommendation for an opera that should be on any Handel lover's shortlist."

– Richard Wigmore, *Gramophone*

"Against the odds, director Harry Bicket has gifted us the best ever recording of *Rodelinda*... As Grimoaldo, Joshua Ellicott textures his part finely. After machismo numbers, Ellicott brings to 'Prigioniera ho l'alma in pena' a fragility that affectingly reveals how *Rodelinda*'s rejection has broken his heart."

– Berta Joncus, *BBC Music Magazine******

"[Ellicott] has his special moment in the great *accompagnato* 'Fatto inferno', where the superiority of his Italian ... is given full play to produce one of the most dramatic passages in the performance."

– Brian Robins, *Opera Magazine*

"...a first-rate lineup."

– Fiona Maddocks, *The Guardian*

"Joshua Ellicott eliciting a surprising amount of sympathy for the usurper Grimoaldo (particularly in his beguiling Act Three aria 'Pastorello d'un povero armento")

– Katherine Cooper, *Presto Classical (Recording of the Week)*

"Vestiges of unfeigned affection are audible in tenor Joshua Ellicott's complex, conflicted portrayal of Grimoaldo. Without neglecting the ferocity at the core of Grimoaldo's subterfuges, his singing conveys unexpected fragility. The first of his arias in Act One, 'lo già t'amai, ritrosa,' is voiced with bemused vehemence.

He sings first 'Prigioniera hò l'alma in pena' and, later in the act [2], 'Tuo drudo è mio rivale, tu sposo' with close attention to the ways in which Händel's vocal writing advances the character's psychological development. Vividly intelligible in every scene in which he appears, Ellicott's diction galvanizes this *Rodelinda*'s dramatic electricity in Act Three, baring Grimoaldo's competing emotions in 'Trà sospetti, affetti, e timori.' Moreover, the tenor's enunciation of the *accompagnato* 'Fatto inferno è il mio petto'..."

– Joseph Newsome, *Voix des Arts*

Winter into Spring, recital with Anna Tilbrook, The Oxford Lieder Festival (February 2021)

"... his recital, with Anna Tilbrook at the piano, paid quiet homage to the partnership of Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears, a Schubert group preceded by Britten's Winter Words. His lean, very English-sounding tenor is an ideal instrument for Britten's songs, and he clearly has a keen narrative gift..."

– Hugh Canning, *The Times*

"First tenor Joshua Ellicott and pianist Anna Tilbrook wrung us with Britten's Winter Words — a cycle of Hardy settings bookended by some of the composer's bleakest vignettes — characters caught in a cycle of missed connections, isolation, exclusion. Ellicott whittles his voice down to a Pearsian point for these sketched miniatures, his line so spare that even the slightest softening —

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the melisma that halos the seraphim in 'The Choirmaster's Burial', the floated opening to 'A Time there Was' — tells keenly."
- **Alexandra Coghlan, *The Spectator***

Lammermuir Festival recital with Anna Tilbrook (September 2020)

"Tenor Joshua Ellicott, joined by pianist Anna Tilbrook, gave a glorious nature-themed recital the following day, beginning with three tender, thoughtful Schubert songs before blossoming into the more troubled romance of Schumann's Op. 39 Liederkreis, which also allowed Ellicott's lyric tenor to bloom into rich, radiant colours. They continued with five Vaughan Williams songs that rather magically matched visionary mysticism with a sturdy gruffness, and were all the more powerful as a result."

- **David Kettle, *The Scotsman***

"The little church of Holy Trinity, Haddington is hosting nearly all of this year's concerts. It is a snug venue with a lovely acoustic, and the engineers have done a first rate job of capturing it. Joshua Ellicott's golden-voiced tenor sounded wonderful in it, partnered by the sensitive, responsive pianism of Anna Tilbrook for his song recital. His opening set of Schubert nature songs oozed gemütlichkeit, with a sound as warm as the autumn sun; and he then gave a haunting performance of Schumann's Opus 39 Liederkreis, which married the poems' energy with the beauty of the music, bewitchingly so in 'Mondnacht'. There was more nature-painting in his Vaughan Williams selection, with a delightful Linden Lea, followed by three of the Songs of Travel, where Tilbrook's piano line drew my ear as much as Ellicott's voice, and a radiant Silent Noon, before two Quilter songs ended a beautifully conceived recital."

- **Simon Thompson, *Seen and Heard International***

Britten *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Sage Gateshead (November 2019)

"Tenor Joshua Ellicott and horn Peter Francombe proved a formidable pairing... Ellicott sang with a light airy tenor perfectly suited to the work."

- **Gavin Engelbrecht, *The Northern Echo***

Britten *Canticle V & Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*, City of London Sinfonia (November 2019)

"I have never heard it performed so beautifully. Joshua Ellicott has the perfect voice for Britten. He's got that ghostly, piercing Peter Quinty tone that you associate with his music, but he pulls it off in a sensitive and wonderfully controlled manner."

- **Timmy Fisher, *Classical Music Pod***

CD Recording: Handel *Samson* (title role), Dunedin Consort, CKD 599 (October 2019)

"In this new recording, tenor Joshua Ellicott sings that scene with a probing inwardness. Handel's setting is treated less as an operatic portrayal, more the intimate heart of an evolving religious drama."

- **Richard Fairman, *Financial Times*******

"As Samson himself, tenor Joshua Ellicott navigates that tight-rope between oratorio and opera really well."

- **Andrew McGregor, *BBC Radio 3 Record Review***

"John Butt has created the best Samson ever. He's chosen the original 1743 version, star soloists with early-music chops and his band of top instrumentalists...As Samson, Joshua Ellicott is wonderful from his first air, which he infuses with a whispered despair to the swelling nobility of his last."

- **Berta Joncus, *BBC Music Magazine********

"Joshua Ellicott's Samson is an appealingly sympathetic character, delivering an eloquent "Total eclipse" in Act 1"

- **Graham Rickson, *The Arts Desk***

"Here we have Joshua Ellicott, a lyric tenor known for his Evangelist in Bach's passions as well as later 19th century repertoire."

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Here he brings a real sense of intimacy to the role... We are in Samson's head, as much as we are anywhere and Ellicott's reading really brings this over. His account of 'Total Eclipse' starts in the most intimate, moving manner, and then grows into something approaching operatic. Ellicott's voice is a lyric one, with the remarkable staying power to cope with the long role... expressively characterful and with an ability to bring a remarkable sense of focussed power to the vocal line when needed."

- Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*

"Joshua Ellicott ... light and eloquent"

- Nicholas Kenyon, *The Guardian*

"In the title role, tenor Joshua Ellicott...drew me more deeply into Samson's plight: in his spiritual anguish ('Total eclipse' is moving in its quiet inwardness and lack of rhetoric), in the graphic encounters with Dalila and the Philistine heavy Harapha, and in his serene, cathartic 'Thus when the sun', where Butt's spacious tempo again pays dividends. ...I'm plumping for Samson: for its superb solo team, led by Joshua Ellicott"

- Richard Wigmore, *Gramophone*

"In the role of the fallen and tortured hero, the tenor Joshua Ellicott delivers a performance of anthology... the voice knows how to play with all the expressive colors to transcribe the range of emotions associated with this tragic character"

- Pierre Degott, *ResMusica*

Handel *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (Tempo), Royal Danish Opera (April 2019)

"The soloists were excellent... Joshua Ellicott with his powerful, dramatic tenor."

- Lars-Erik Larsson, *Norra*

Skåne

"Joshua Ellicott as Time, awakens Beauty and wanders through an adventurous labyrinth of chords"

- Jan Brachmann, *Frankfurter Allgemeine*

"English tenor Joshua Ellicott seized the stage with authority as Time. A competent heir in the strong lyrical tenor tradition in his home country, his voice was able to seamlessly change from cool softness to bright sharpness."

- Valdemar Lønsted, *Dagbladet Information*

"...the deeply controlled Joshua Ellicott as Time."

- Søren Schauser, *Berlinske Tidende*

"... the English tenor Joshua Ellicott breaks in: "Fool!" - fool! - he thunders with full, warm voice."

- Ars Artis

"Mezzo Sonia Prina, ...with Time, the tenor Joshua Ellicott. The two have unbelievable voices, taken from the English song culture which has driven vocal articulation, not least in Handel works."

- Gregers Dirckinck-Holmfeld, *gregersDH*

"Joshua Ellicott is appropriately pompous in his interpretation of Time."

- Sceneblog

Odes to St Cecilia: Purcell, Britten & Handel, The King's Consort (November 2018)

"...with fine singing from the soloists, soprano, Julia Doyle, countertenor, Robin Blaze and Joshua Ellicott, tenor"

- Frank Cliff, *Eastern Daily Press*

Stuart MacRae *I am Prometheus*, The Hebrides Ensemble (September 2018)

"Joshua Ellicott giving a restless, questioning, deeply human performance as the eponymous Titan."

- David Kettle, *The Scotsman*

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Handel *Solomon (Zadok)*, Scottish Chamber Orchestra (April 2018)

"Joshua Ellicott, on the other hand, made a lot out of the little that Zadok the priest has to do, and his beautiful tenor, full of juicy tone and agile technique, was revelatory, an example of how wonderful this music can sound when it is sung with proper lyricism."

-Simon Thompson, *bachtrack*****

"Joshua Ellicott's tenor voice mastered the vibrato trills superbly in the role of Zadok"

-Barbara Bryan, *Edinburgh Guide*****

"Tenor Joshua Ellicott made a nimble, lyrical Zadok"

-David Kettle, *The Scotsman*

Bach *St John Passion (Evangelist)*, Teatro Arriaga (April 2018)

"As always, Bieito inspired astonishing levels of commitment from his cast, which also included Joshua Ellicott as the Evangelist..."

- Xavier Cester, *Opera Magazine*

Bach *St John Passion (Evangelist)*, Yorkshire Bach Choir (March 2018)

"Joshua Ellicott took the demanding Evangelist role ... This was lucid, dramatic storytelling, ravishly sung."

- Robert Gammon, *The York Press*

CD Recording: *Dyson Choral Symphony*, Bournemouth Symphony (November 2017)

"Joshua Ellicott sings with a true sense of drama"

- Andrew Mellor, *Gramophone*

Mozart *Lucio Silla (Title)*, Buxton Festival, Buxton Opera House (July 2017)

"I have nothing but admiration for Joshua Ellicott as Lucio, the tyrant who melts to produce an unlikely happy ending."

- Richard Morrison, *The Times*

"In the title role tenor Joshua Ellicott has great fun giving the audience his Richard III, with a little Mozart on the side."

- Alexandra Coghlan, *The Spectator*

"Joshua Ellicott succeeds in giving Silla an angry and unstable persona."

- George Hall, *thestage.co.uk*

"The two men in the cast included the eponymous role of Lucio. Portrayed by Joshua Ellicott whose committed acting, and bravura singing, made a convincing dictator. Although Silla's conversion to benevolence was sudden Ellicott achieved both facets of the character with vocal aplomb and good characterization."

- Robert J. Farr, *seenandheard-international.com*

"Joshua Ellicott made a strong impression as the dictator Silla, one minute railing against the conspirators and threatening Giunia for refusing to marry him, and the next minute wracked by anxieties and worries. He made the *lieto fine* work."

- Robert Hugill, *planethugill.com*

'Joshua Ellicott was impressive as Silla...'

- *Opera Now*

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From Your Ever-Loving Son Jack, Cheltenham Festival, Parabola Arts Centre (July 2016)

"From Your Ever-Loving Son Jack, performed by the tenor Joshua Ellicott and the pianist Simon Lepper, was a sequence of songs and extracts from letters home written by the singer's great-uncle during his tragically brief First World War enlistment. In a redoubtable Lancashire accent, Ellicott warmly conveyed the soldier's resolute cheerfulness — that innocence agonising to think of — and intermittently burst into song, whether the high art of Frank Bridge's late, searing Humbert Wolfe setting, Journey's End, or Haydn Wood's sentimentally appealing Roses of Picardy. His vocal power and diversity of repertoire were alike impressive."

– Paul Driver, *The Sunday Times*

Bach St Matthew Passion, The Sixteen / Streetwise Opera, Campfield Market, Manchester (March 2016)

"The outstanding tenor Joshua Ellicott is one of the most distinguished Evangelists of the day." – Alfred Hickling, *The Guardian*

"Joshua Ellicott's blazingly committed Evangelist."

– Richard Morrison, *The Times*

"The Evangelist's narration...expressively declaimed by Joshua Ellicott."

– Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph*

"There was a glorious Evangelist in Joshua Ellicott, a dashing, agile tenor whose engagement with the action was enthralling and who never missed a beat as he sped round the hall, telling the Passion story with emotional urgency."

– Michael White, *The New York Times*

"Joshua Ellicott was a beautifully efficient Evangelist, such a bright and lively voice. His effortless vocalising led and smoothed every plot twist and turn, embodying his role's narrative control."

– Imogen Phoebe, *bachtrack.com*

"At the centre of everything was the remarkable performance of the Evangelist by Joshua Ellicott. Dressed in modern clothes, unlike the main performers enacting the passion, he was in a sense interpreting the events for us, the modern audience. He created an almost visceral connection, singing with a remarkable intensity but never letting go of the sense of line and word which is the essential to any Evangelist."

– Robert Hugill, *planethugill.com*

Handel Samson, Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Symphony Hall (April 2014)

"...with tenor Joshua Ellicott's forceful performance shining like the brightest of ornaments on the hood of a gleaming, well-oiled machine. Ellicott didn't just fill Symphony Hall with his incandescent, seemingly effortless sound; he also broke many a hardened heart with his compelling take on this tortured text."

As noted, tenor Ellicott was nothing less than riveting, delivering a fierce, keening power that sometimes conjured Milton's own rhetorical voice, as well as literally the darkest depths of despair (in the terrifying "Total eclipse") or the harshest heights of rage ("Why does the God of Israel sleep?"). Finally, of course, Samson finds God's light, as well as a transcendent calm – which Ellicott also captured exquisitely as Samson made his way toward his doom in the temple of the Philistines."

– *The Hub Review*

"Joshua Ellicott's dramatic tenor had the persuasive power to arouse our sense of pity. After an orchestral ritornello, his first aria began with the chilling words "Total eclipse," sung without accompaniment here and each time they reappeared. The opening words of the rage aria "Why does the God of Israel sleep?" were again sung unaccompanied. In the fulminations that followed, Ellicott's voice had the force and the flexibility to handle extensive coloratura passages with conviction."

– *Musical Intelligencer*

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Bach *St John Passion*, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, BBC Proms, Royal Albert Hall (July 2014)

"The aria 'Erwäge wie sein blutgefärbter Rücken' (which contemplates Christ's wounded body) showed how expressive he could be."

– **The Daily Telegraph**

"...the outstanding Joshua Ellicott..."

– **The Times**

Styriarte Festival (2014)

...the magnificent tenor Joshua Ellicott."

– **Wiener Zeitung**

Bach *Christmas Oratorio*, Ludus Baroque (December 2013)

"the powerful voice of tenor Joshua Ellicott knocked us over like a bowling ball rolling down the aisle (in the midst of such consummate professionalism by all, it seems wrong to have a favourite (but I'll confess to a silent "oh good" every time Ellicott stood up to sing)."

– **The Scotsman**

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Symphony Hall (March 2012)

"Deservedly huge cheers at the end of the night went to Joshua Ellicott...musical distinction, emotional precision and a keen dramatic urgency."

– **The Boston Globe**