
Matthew Brook

Selected Reviews

CD Recording: Bach *Cantatas – Ich habe genug*, Dunedin Consort (Linn) (October 2021)

"Bass Matthew Brook and soprano Joanne Lunn are monumental among the five-piece vocal team. ...A truly moving and beautiful disc."

- Ken Walton, *The Scotsman*

Haydn *Creation* (Raphael), Academy of Ancient Music, Barbican (September 2021)

"...when Matthew Brook's angel Raphael was in full flow, guiding us through the delights of God's menagerie with twinkling eyes and infinite humour. Brook was an absolute delight. None of his comrades approached his sparkle..."

- Geoff Brown, *The Times******

"Matthew Brook's Raphael captured the curious mix of lyricism, wonder and drollery in Haydn's settings of the Genesis stories. His soaring, rhapsodic passages of awe yield to stretches of almost-comic patter as the sheer oddity of God's handiwork – slitherers, waddlers, creepy-crawlies and all – finds musical shape. It's not often you hear audience belly-laughs in a canonical masterpiece like this, but Brook got them when he showed how "in long dimension creeps with sinuous trace the worm"."

- Boyd Tonkin, *The Arts Desk******

"The other angelic roles were well taken by bass-baritone Matthew Brook as Raphael – a model of controlled resonance"

- Sandra Bowdler, *Bachtrack******

Monteverdi, Dunedin Consort at the Lammermuir Festival (September 2021)

"In a kind of musical onomatopoeia, Monteverdi's subtle, yet dynamic music turns, in a moment, from a gorgeous poignancy to an invigorating declaration, announced by the sudden, vocal attack of the fabulous bass baritone Matthew Brook... Throughout the concert, the reverberating depth of Brook's voice complements and contrasts wonderfully with the magnificent singing of mezzo-soprano Jessica Gillingwater, sopranos Hilary Cronin and Julia Doyle, and tenors Bowen and Matthew Long."

- Mark Brown, *The National (Scotland)*

CD Recording: Dodgson's *Margaret Catchpole: Two Worlds Apart* (Naxos 8.660459-61)

"...Matthew Brook makes a forthright Judge."

- George Hall, *Opera Magazine*

Wallen *Dido's Ghost* (Aeneas), Dunedin Consort, Barbican (June 2021)

"Dido's Ghost will certainly be welcomed by all singers who have craved the limelight denied to them in the under-characterised original role of Aeneas. Written here for the compelling bass-baritone Matthew Brook, the part is fleshed out to the extent that he even gets the celebrated Lament."

- John Allison, *The Telegraph*

"Aeneas himself, Dido-obsessed, clearly needs a psychiatrist, but at least the character finds some succour singing Purcell's heart-aching setting of Dido's Lament, "When I am laid in earth". As movingly rendered by Matthew Brook, this was the evening's peak: the one point where the audience's emotional involvement could be guaranteed."

- Geoff Brown, *The Times*

"...the emotional shell of Aeneas, superbly portrayed and sung by the bass baritone Matthew Brook."

- Fiona Maddocks, *The Guardian******

"But it's Matthew Brook's Aeneas who carries the piece. The feckless charmer of Purcell's origin here becomes wiser and sadder – finally a man worthy of the Lament, which he delivers with heart-stopping vulnerability and tenderness. "Remember me," he sings. And we will."

- Alexandra Coghlan, *iNews*

"...the focus was on Matthew Brook's Aeneas, his firm baritone successfully setting the path for Rome's foundation but now completely haunted by regret of a lost love and the shame of his behaviour... Phrases from Dido's Lament were scattered, but in the end it was Aeneas who got the aria, sung movingly as a broken man, a touch of falsetto here and there, Dido's ghost and Anna both gone... While it was intriguing to see a Baroque band embracing modern styles, it was the intense commitment of the singers which made this dramatic work so compelling."

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

"...there are memorable performances from the strong central cast, with standouts from ... Matthew Brook's conflicted Aeneas"

- George Hall, *The Stage*

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"Matthew Brook was powerfully affecting as the obsessed Aeneas..."

– Ivan Hewett, *Opera Magazine*

CD: Purcell *Odes*, The King's Consort, VIVAT121 (February 2021)

"King has assembled another crack team of singers... the rampant testosterone of the duet 'Her hero to whose conduct' by [Edward] Grint and Matthew Brook". - *Gramophone*

"In 'Welcome Glorious Morn' we reach a higher musical level. Both Carolyn Sampson and Matthew Brook suavely maintain their lines against the ingenious but busy aria accompaniments..." – *BBC Music Magazine*

Handel *Agrippina* (Claudio), Teatro de La Maestranza (February 2020)

"In addition, among vocal soloists, there is a barrage of specialists in the repertoire such as ...Matthew Brook"

- Ismael G. Cabral, *Opera Actual*

CD: Handel *Samson* (Manoah), Dunedin Consort, CKD 599 (October 2019)

"As Samson's father Manoah, Matthew Brook field a ripe yet agile bass. His Chastened tenderness in 'How willing my paternal love' is profoundly moving."

- Richard Wigmore, *Gramophone*

"The intention of this style of oratorio was a moral one, there was a story to tell, a point to make and words are essential. But Brook seems to have the gift in spades, and his way of combining text and music is masterly and makes even his recitatives powerfully expressive tools. Yet he can also bring a virile swagger to the music when needed as well!"

- Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*

"The two basses also look good, and we find with great pleasure Matthew Brook, moving Manoa whose singer perfectly translates kindness and nobility. His air "How willing my paternal love" will be among the highlights of this recording."

- Pierre Degott, *ResMusica*

Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Symphony Hall Birmingham (November 2019)

"Matthew Brook's imposing delivery of this short solo suggested that he would be a prophet to be reckoned with, and so it proved. Though there wasn't anything approaching a weak link in this performance, Brook's assumption of the title role was outstanding. ... Mendelssohn's portrayal of the prophet shows Elijah not merely as a thundering character; there's a subtle, sensitive side as well. Brook's triumph lay in the fact that he was capable of giving us this rounded portrayal. ... I admired the warm sincerity that he brought to the scene in Part I where he entreats for the life of the Widow's son, but within moments Brook was full of fiery righteousness in his denunciation of King Ahab and then he dared the followers of Baal to summon up their false god. His rendition of 'Lord God of Abraham', sung with seamless line and ample reserves of tone, was a highlight of the evening, but within a few minutes Brook was able effortlessly to change the mood again for a thrilling account of 'Is not his word like a fire?' which was marvellously articulated at the blistering pace set by Kazuki Yamada. In Part II we heard an outstanding rendition of 'It is enough' in which the outer sections were eloquently sung in contrast to the biting drama of the central section. ... Brook made this into a dignified, lyrical envoi, setting the seal on his memorable performance."

- John Quinn, *Seen and Heard International*

Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*, University of York Choir & Symphony Orchestra (June 2019)

"Matthew Brook's baritone commendably maintained gravitas" – Charles Hutchinson, *The York Press*

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Dunedin Consort, Boston Early Music Festival (June 2019)

"Bass Matthew Brook was a regal and eloquent Jesus" - Zoë Madonna, *Boston Globe*

"Outstanding among all eight champions of heroic endurance: Matthew Brook brought the world-weary ember warmth and occasional gravelly gravity of a Verdian father role to Jesus's utterances and bass solos including "Komm, süßes Kreuz" and "Mache dich, mein Herze, rein." - CJ Ru, *The Boston Musical Intelligencer*

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Bach *B Minor Mass*, Les Violons du Roy, Le Palais Montcalm / Carnegie Hall / Maison Symphonique de Montréal (May 2019)

"The favourite is however the bass Matthew Brook ... A born musician, the singer uses his voice with intelligence and aplomb, sometimes in dialogue with the horn, sometimes with the flute, and skillfully lightening his voice in the high notes when necessary." - **Emmanuel Bernier, *Bachtrack********

CD: Berlioz *L'Enfance du Christ*(Herod/Father), Melbourne Symphony Orchestra [Chandos CHSA5228] (February 2019)

"All soloists are excellent...Matthew Brook brings just that touch of extra warmth to the role."

- **Roger Nicholas, *BBC Music Magazine********

"Matthew Brook tellingly communicates both the psychological turmoil of Herod and the tenderness of the Ishmaelite."

- **Tony Way, *Limelight Magazine********

"Matthew Brook's sonorous Herod" – **Tim Ashley, *Gramophone***

Berlioz *L'Enfance du Christ*(Herod/Father), BBC National Chorus and Orchestra of Wales (February 2019)

"Matthew Brook appeared to embrace the work as opera. He inhabited his dual roles as a malevolent and paranoid Herod and later as a compassionate Ishmaelite father with evident conviction, enjoying his characterisations and seemingly transforming the platform into a stage. His rich baritone wrapped itself with growing torment around his Part 1 soliloquy, and was sung so melliflously he almost drew our sympathy. Whilst there wasn't quite enough menace or projection in his lower register, there was enough cutting-edge timbre above and detailed expression to bring off a persuasive performance that seared itself onto the memory." - **David Truslove, *Opera Today***

"...three of the soloists featured here had already given the work in Melbourne with Sir Andrew Davis, and the confidence of the singing was indeed exceptional. ...Matthew Brook was also superb doubling as the dream-haunted Herod and the welcoming Ishmaelite father... Herod is of course the only character in the story with any opportunity for real operatic passion, and Brook rose to his moments with a real sense of rage." - **Paul Corfield Godfrey, *Seen and Heard International***

Bach *Christmas Oratorio*, The Choir of Trinity College, Handel *Messiah*, Polyphony, St John's Smith Square (December 2018)

"Matthew Brook ... sang 'Grosser Herr' enthusiastically and gave a solid performance of 'The trumpet shall sound'"

- **Melanie Eskenazi, *MusicOMH***

Bach *St John Passion*(Jesus), St Paul Chamber Orchestra, Cathedral of Saint Paul & Ordway Concert Hall (November 2018)

"As Jesus, bass Matthew Brook brought gravitas and dignity, with sonorous tone and immaculately clear diction. Brook's confrontation with the Pontius Pilate of baritone William Berger compelled attention, the two glaring at each other from

opposite ends of the Ordway platform in mutual suspicion." - **Terry Blain, *Minneapolis Star Tribune***

"Matthew Brook brought a booming bass voice to Jesus that most impressed when he gently soared to the top of his register as death approached." – **Rob Hubbard, *TwinCities.com***

***The English Vocal Revolution*, Theatre of the Ayre, York Early Music Festival (July 2018)**

"Brook conjured a roisterous Falstaffian image in 'Tis Late and Cold, Stoke Up The Fire'." – **Martin Dreyer, *The York Press***

Berlioz *L'Enfance du Christ*(Herod/Father), Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (June 2018)

"Bass Matthew Brook also does excellent work in his two contrasting roles; firstly conveying the psychological tumult of King Herod, and by contrast, evincing the warmth and welcome of the Ishmaelite paterfamilias." – **Tony Way, *Limelight Magazine***

"Matthew Brook's bass doubled for a psychologically frantic Herod and later, as the Family Father's benevolent voice of charity for the holy trio of escapees." – **Clive O'Connell, *The Sydney Morning Herald********

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Purcell *Fairy Queen*, Handel and Haydn Society, NEC Jordan Hall, Boston (April 2018)

"Brook was a high point of last year's "Semele," and he brought the same powerful, expressive voice and lusty comic relief to this production." - **Zoë Madonna, *Boston Globe***

"The two nominal star soloists, Matthew Brook and Charles Humphries ... camped it up lavishly and sang without vocal distinction, although both understood Purcell's requirements." – **David Shengold, *Opera Magazine***

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Royal Festival Hall (March 2018)

"Matthew Brook's bass was one of the outstanding voices of the evening. His characterisation of Pilate moved between outraged condescension and guilt, and his recitatives were delivered with lucidity and force. "Gerne will Ich mich bequemen" had a dark core that tapped the seam of northern European melancholy which pierces the heart of the Matthew Passion. Some of the most intense emotional ratcheting came in "Gebt mir meinen Jesum wieder", where Brook prowled, wounded, bristling at the violin obbligato – delivered by OAE violinist Michael Gurevich, who lead orchestra two – whose searing lyricism channeled all the guilt and fury of Picander's text: "Give, O Give me back my Lord, / See the silver, price of blood, / At your feet in horror pour'd. / By the lost betrayer." – **Benjamin Poore, *bachtrack***

Bach *Cantatas*, Nederlandse Bachvereniging (February 2018)

"Majestic jubilation reigns from the beginning to the end in *Wachet auf, uns that Stimme* (BWV 140). From the sublimely interpreted opening choir to the strikingly sung duets by soprano Maria Keohane and bass Matthew Brook." – **Joep Christenhusz, NRC**

Bach *Christmas Oratorio*, The Trinity College Cambridge Choir, St John's Smith Square (December 2017)

"Matthew Brook ... gave his recitatives solemnity and pathos, and he sang his part in 'Herr, dein Mitleid' with the required ardour." -**Melanie Eskenazi, *MusicOMH***

Mendelssohn *Elijah*, Holmfirth Choral Society (November 2017)

"Internationally renowned bass Matthew Brook added star quality with his utterly convincing performance as Elijah. A commanding and authoritative presence was marked by vocal power and resonance and in equal measure some spell-bindingly quiet singing." – **Andrew Hirst, *Huddersfield Daily Examiner***

Haydn *The Creation*, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Symphony Hall, Birmingham (September 2017)

"Matthew Brook brought story-telling warmth to the bass-baritone roles." – **Ivan Hewett, *The Telegraph***

"There was a wonderful empathy from the official trio of soloists (Lydia Teuscher, Thomas Hobbs, Matthew Brook)." – **Christopher Morley, *Birmingham Post***

"Mathew Brook was outstanding. His firm, well-focused voice was ideally suited to the music and his diction was impeccable. In Parts I and II he really told his portions of the story vividly, characterising the music in a most engaging way. The characterful aspect of his singing reached its zenith in 'Straight opening her fertile womb'; here he illustrated the creation of various beasts most entertainingly and in a way that clearly amused the audience ... Brook was manly and suave."

– **John Quinn, *Seen and Heard International***

Bach *St John Passion* (Christus), The Dunedin Consort, BBC Prom, Royal Albert Hall, London (August 2017)

"Matthew Brook's Jesus was at times strikingly angry." – **Tim Ashley, *The Guardian***

"Authority and presence poured from Matthew Brook's Jesus." – **David Nice, *theartsdesk.com***

"The dignified Jesus of Matthew Brook, who similarly used the words to devastating effect and somehow conveyed that he really did mean it. He sang with a trenchant firmness of line, and rather than being other-worldly was wonderfully human."

– **Robert Hugill, *Opera Today***

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Purcell *The Fairy Queen* (Drunken Poet), Handel and Haydn Society, Tanglewood (August 2017)

"Matthew Brook was especially entertaining as the Drunken Poet, tipping lustily into his first entry."

– Hilary Scott, *The New York Times*

Handel *Ariodante* (Il Re), The English Concert, Barbican Centre, London (May 2017)

"Matthew Brook's King was beautifully characterised and sung." – Anna Picard, *The Times*

"Plaudits are also due to Matthew Brook for his vivid portrayal of the King – one of Handel's richest operatic roles for bass."

– Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph*

"Matthew Brook found depth of feeling in the role of the King of Scotland." – Richard Fairman, *The Financial Times*

"The vocal line of Matthew Brook's King was charged with grief...perplexing yet glorious, every life-enhancing minute of it."

– Barry Millington, *The Evening Standard*

Handel *Semele* (Cadmus/Somnus), Handel & Haydn Society, Symphony Hall, Boston (May 2017)

"The robust bass-baritone Matthew Brook was imposing as Cadmus and hilariously hammy as Somnus. He blinked blearily at the lights overhead during his "Leave me, loathsome light," and instantly roused himself for a lusty "More sweet is that name"."

– Zoë Madonna, *The Boston Globe*

"As Semele's father Cadmus and the god of sleep Somnus, bass-baritone Matthew Brook brought equal parts command and humor. Cadmus' aria "Wing'd with our fears, and pious haste" brilliantly conveyed the image of Semele being taken by the eagle. And Somnus' aria "Leave me, loathsome light" was fittingly lethargic." – Aaron Keebaugh, *Boston Classical Review*

Handel *Ariodante* (Il Re), The English Concert, Carnegie Hall, New York & Kennedy Center, Washington DC (April/May 2017)

"The solid bass-baritone Matthew Brook, as the king [...] was excellent." – Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times*

"Matthew Brook plumbed some of the darkest depths of grief in the opera as the King, his luxurious, dark bass-baritone betraying immense pain in his Act II lament 'Invida sorte avara'." – Eric C. Simpson, *New York Classical Review*

"Anyone who thinks baroque opera isn't relevant had only to see and hear Matthew Brook as the King of Scotland, Ginevra's father, moving from paternal delight at her impending marriage to anguish when he believes Ariodante dead to horror when he believes Ginevra's infidelity caused that death. The story line may be dated, but the basic emotions, and the powerful singing, were anything but." – Anne Midgette, *The Washington Post*

Handel *Ariodante* (Il Re), Staatstheater Stuttgart, Stuttgart (March 2017)

"Matthew Brook sings the torn king with a lot of nuance and patriarchal pathos."

– Gerhard R Koch, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*

"Matthew Brook is a very strong King." – Mirko Weber, *Stuttgarter Zeitung*

"The ensemble...shows disarming musical ability...in particular Matthew Brook as the wriggly King."

– Wolfgang Schreiber, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*

"Matthew Brook as the supply sung king is the standout in the cast." – Karl Georg Berg, *Die Rheinpfalz*

"Matthew Brook, renowned as a Baroque specialist and appearing in Stuttgart as a guest, mastered the role of the King with flying colours." – Werner Grimm, *Schwaebische Zeitung*

"Matthew Brook as the King...is part of a top team." – Juergen Kanold, *Suedwest Presse*

"Matthew Brook brings out the cowardly aspect of the role by adding a fair amount of lachrymosity into his sympathy."

– Christoph Wurzel, *Online Musik Magazin*

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"Outstanding performances by the men, Matthew Brook as the King of Scotland paints the finest nuances, singing his threnody with so much credibility that it almost makes you cry." – **Ulrich Enzel, *Heilbronner Stimme***

"As the King, Matthew Brook impressed with his good Italianita and his well-cultivated bass." – **Der Klassikkritiker**

"The King of Scotland's beautiful bass voice: Matthew Brook." – **Laszlo Molnar, *Klassikinfo***

Handel *Messiah*, Dunedin Consort, Kings Place, London (December 2016)

"Brook sounded fierily brilliant in Why Do the Nations and The Trumpet Shall Sound." – **Tim Ashley, *The Guardian***

***Cryptic, Fantasy and Madness*, Dunedin Consort, Assembly Roxy, Edinburgh (October 2016)**

"Singers Mhairi Lawson and Matthew Brook – both ruddy-cheeked and grinning suggestively – gave brilliantly vivid performances, full of vocal theatrics, savouring every word for its dramatic potential." – **David Kettle *The Scotsman***

Purcell *The Married Beau*, The English Concert, Wigmore Hall (September 2016)

"Matthew Brook [was] genial and gusty in his arias." – **Neil Fisher, *The Times***

"More engaging still was bass-baritone Matthew Brook, a born performer with something of the great Christopher Purves about his tone and dramatisation, in Cardenio's "Let the Dreadful Engines"." – **David Nice, *theartsdesk.com***

"Matthew Brook gave us a characterful and delightfully swaggering rogue in *When the World first knew creation*. A lively *Aire* and another *Hornpipe* were followed by Brook's performance of *Let the Dreadful Engines*, a song in which the singer mistakenly believes his love has rejected him. The result was a highly dramatic sequence, full of free arioso with some lovely bravura moments, as well as charm and quiet passion. Brook really brought out the words, and turned the piece into a real tour de force." – **Robert Hugill, *planethuggill.com***

Bach *St John Passion*, Handel & Haydn Society, Boston Symphony Hall (March 2016)

"In bass-baritone Matthew Brook's forthright performance, Jesus was a strong if enigmatic human presence... Immediately preceding the latter aria, the same two violinists accompanied bass-baritone Brook in a touchingly halting performance of the meditation "Betrachte, meine Seel." The bass-baritone sounded a more urgent note in the aria "Eilt, ihr angefochtne Seelen" (Hurry, you tormented souls), in which the rapid choral interjections of "Wohin?" (Where?) were uncannily soft, like echoes of disembodied souls." – **David Wright, *Boston Classical Review***

"Bass-baritone Matthew Brook sang the role of Jesus with mellifluous gravity and warm beauty of tone. Although additional singers are often employed for the tenor and bass arias, these were sung by Mulroy and Brook respectively, requiring a shift in character from narrator or active participant to grieving bystander, a role change they both handled convincingly. A highlight of the evening was the bass arioso, "Betrachte, meine Seel" (Ponder, my soul), the jagged intervals of the vocal line accompanied by two muted violins." – **Virginia Newes, *The Boston Musical Intelligencer***

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, St Paul Chamber Orchestra, Ordway Concert Hall (October 2015)

"The others, all of whom contributed mightily, were Mhairi Lawson, Anna Dennis, Helen Charlston, Nick Pritchard and Matthew Brook." – **Michael Anthony, *Star Tribune***

Monteverdi *Orfeo* (Charon), Boston Early Music Festival (June 2015)

"Bass-baritone Matthew Brook made for a strong-voiced and scary Charon." – **Charles Warren, *New York Arts***

Haydn *The Creation*, Handel & Haydn Society, Boston Symphony Hall (May 2015)

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"Matthew Brook found an ideal balance between humor and profundity." – **David Allen, *The New York Times***

Haydn *The Creation*, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Queen's Hall, Edinburgh (May 2015)

"Of the three soloists, the baritone Matthew Brook (Raphael and Adam) rather stole the show with his wonderfully expressive face and keen sense of humour. He relished all his words, delivering every one with a twinkle in his eye, but for his caricatures of the many animals of God's creation, particularly the worm, he reduced the audience to laughter."

– **Christopher Lambton, *theartsdesk.com***

Haydn *The Creation*, BBC NOW, St David's Hall (May 2015)

"Matthew Brook launched the opening recitative with a beautifully withdrawn tone which gripped the listener and elicited laughter from the audience during his descriptions of the various animals where Haydn really lets his sense of humour off the leash...as Adam he ranged into the upper register with ease with a fine sense of lyricism."

– **Paul Corfield Godfrey, *Seen and Heard International***

"Brook was a wonderfully clear and incisive Adam, as he was Raphael...never lacking in musical panache. Indeed, Brook's *opera buffa* rendition of the various animals from 'heavy beasts' to 'bleating sheep' and the 'sinuous worm' – aided by fruity brass and lithe strings with but two, excellent double basses – was sheer comic pleasure." – **Steph Power, *Wales Arts Review***

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, OAE, Royal Festival Hall (April 2015)

"I think bass is appropriate for this fine singer, who always seems to give total satisfaction. His fine tone is capable of a wide range of nuance and although, as Pilate, he was stuck at the back of the stage, he made an authoritative figure."

– **Tully Potter, *classicalsource.com***

Bach *St John Passion*, Soli Deo Gloria, Harris Theater Chicago (March 2015)

"Matthew Brook was a fine Pilate, dramatically natural in his questioning of Morscheck's Jesus, and characterful in his arias."

– **Lawrence A. Johnson, *Chicago Classical Review***

"Bass-baritone Matthew Brook conveyed both punch and pathos in his changing roles during this work."

– **Kyle Macmillan, *Chicago Sun-Times***

Bach *Coffee Cantatas*, Glad Café, Glasgow (September 2015)

"Cantatas 165 and 31 featured excellent singing from Matthew Brook." – **Kate Molleson, *The Herald***

"*Schweigt stille, plaudert nicht* BWV 211 the "Coffee Cantata" is a 'must hear' for those who regard Bach as severe. It was delivered here with a wonderfully light touch, particularly by sonorous bass Matthew Brook whose opening 'kids these days' aria exuded the comic exasperation of a sorely tested parent." – **Alan Coady, *bachtrack.com***

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Three Choirs Festival, Hereford Cathedral (July 2015)

"Bass Matthew Brook brought a shining dignity to his portrayal of Christ." – **Stephen Prichard, *The Observer***

"The superlative bass-baritone Matthew Brook as Christ." – **Roderic Dunnett, *bachtrack.com***

Bach *St Matthew Passion* (1727 Version), York Bach Choir / Peter Seymour, Signum SIGCD385 (June 2015)

"The second bass is Matthew Brook, who...firmly captures the dichotomy of articulate precision and dramatic desperation in 'Gebt mir meinen Jesum wieder'." – **David Vickers, *Gramophone***

Handel *Messiah*, Cardiff Polyphonic Choir 50th Anniversary, St David's Hall, Cardiff (December 2014)

"But it was bass Matthew Brook's vivid projection and the dramatic immediacy he brought that had most impact. His final aria *The trumpet shall sound* with its instrumental obbligato, Ross Brown on valveless trumpet, was as stirring as Handel intended."

– **Rian Evans, *The Guardian***

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Beethoven *Missa Solemnis*, Royal Northern Sinfonia (Zehetmair), The Sage Gateshead (June 2014)

"Matthew Brook's expressive introduction to the "Agnus Dei" was another highlight." – Jane Shuttleworth, *bachtrack.com*

Bach *St John Passion*, Britten Sinfonia, Barbican Centre, London (April 2014)

"Matthew Brook sang Christus and the bass arias with measured nobility." – George Hall, *The Guardian*

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Soli Deo Gloria, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Chicago (April 2014)

"Matthew Brook was eloquent in everything he sang, not least the great aria 'Gerne will ich mich bequemen'."
– John von Rhein, *Chicago Tribune*

"Bass-baritone Matthew Brook provided worthy vocalism in his solo moments as well."

– Lawrence A. Johnson, *Chicago Classical Review*

"Matthew Brook...contributed impressively in [his] solos." – Adam Dahlgren, *Splash Magazines*

Mozart *Requiem*, Dunedin Consort, Hyperion Records CKD 449

"Matthew Brook's bass responds sonorously to the sounding of the last trumpet in the 'Tuba mirum'."

– David Thresher, *Gramophone*

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Yorkshire Bach Choir & Baroque Soloists, St Michael-le-Belfrey, York (March 2014)

"Matthew Brook's Christus was the backbone of the evening, mightily resilient." – Martin Dreyer, *The York Press*

Bach *St John & St Matthew Passions*, Seattle Symphony, Benaroya Hall (February 2014)

"Matthew Brook had room in the St. John to demonstrate profoundly moving artistry both as Jesus and in the arias."

– Bernard Jacobson, *The Seattle Times*

"The rest of the soloists also were impressive, particularly bass-baritone Matthew Brook."

– Melinda Bargreen, *The Seattle Times*

Bach *Christmas Oratorio*, The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (Layton), Hyperion CDA68031/2

"Matthew Brook's resplendent all-guns-blazing 'Grosser Herr'." – Paul Riley, *BBC Music Magazine*

"I was most impressed with the soloists, particularly Matthew Brook's resonant bass." – Graham Lock, *Early Music Magazine*

"Matthew Brook's arias have a most enjoyable vigour." – Carl Rosman, *International Record Review*

Brahms *Requiem*, Royal Northern Sinfonia (Thomas Zehetmair), The Sage, Gateshead (September 2013)

"The other soloist, bass Matthew Brook was also excellent, powerful throughout the range and with particularly rich low notes. The bass soloist pleads God to teach us to know that we all have an end, and his words are echoed by the choir; Matthew Brook gave this passage a firm assurance, and with the interesting effect of a master teaching his students who repeat and accept his lesson." – Jane Shuttleworth, *bachtrack.com*

"Matthew Brook sang with wise authority." – Graham Rickson, *theartsdesk.com*

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Handel *Dixit Dominus*, Queen's College, Oxford, AVIE Label (August 2013)

"Matthew Brook sings the agile bass solo 'Dominus a dextris tuis' authoritatively." – David Vickers, *Gramophone Magazine*

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, Saint-Denis Paris, Soli Deo Gloria Collection DVD (July 2013)

"...with Matthew Brook bringing his usual penetrative interpretation to proceedings."

– Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, *Gramophone Magazine*

"Matthew Brook is the admirable bass." – Nigel Simeone, *International Record Review*

"Matthew Brook is another singer for whom Baroque is a *lingua franca*." – *BBC Music Magazine*

Bach *St John Passion*, Three Choirs Festival (July 2013)

"Matthew Brook was in very fine voice. He sang the recitative part of Pilate intelligently and did his arias very well."

– John Quinn, *seenandheard.com*

Lufthansa Festival of Baroque Music / Elizabeth Kenny, St John's, Smith Square, London (May 2013)

"Brook's fine bass-baritone was a perfect foil in the duets, not least the "Dialogue on a Kiss", which profited from both singers' gift for taking the audience into their confidence." – Andrew Clark, *Financial Times*

Handel *Esther* (Haman), Dunedin Consort, Wigmore Hall, London (April 2013)

"As the venomous Haman, Matthew Brook dark bass-baritone registered with malign force, though he also highlighted the sympathy finally allowed the king's official when he is condemned to death." – George Hall, *The Guardian*

"It is Haman who has the first air, "Pluck root and branch from out the land", and here the commanding bass Matthew Brook established his core vocal strength, to be balanced by the vigorous and perfectly balanced chorus."

– Colin Clarke, *Seen and Heard International*

Lully *Phaëton* (Mérops), Les Talens Lyriques / Rousset, Barbican Hall

"Matthew Brook was another solid bass in the role of Mérops." – Richard Nicholson, *classicalsource.com*

Handel *Messiah*, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, St. David's Hall, Cardiff (December 2012)

"But for me two of the most satisfying parts of the evening were given to us by Bass-baritone Matthew Brook whose singing of the Airs "Why do the nations so furiously rage together" and, in particular, "The trumpet shall sound" were memorable indeed."

– Peter Collins, *The Western Mail*

Pilate and bass-baritone soloist (St John Passion), The Three Choirs Festival, Hereford Cathedral (July 2012)

"Bowen's lineup of soloists were also strong. Matthew Brook tellingly defined Pilate's dilemma as well as finding a mellifluous flow in the bass arias." – Rian Evans, *The Guardian*

"Matthew Brook was in very fine voice. He sang the recitative part of Pilate intelligently and did his arias very well. . . We got a much better view of Brook's vocal prowess in *Betrachte, mein Seel*. Here he could deploy a very pleasing rounded tone and excellent, even legato. He sang the aria warmly and with fine expression. I also enjoyed very much 'Mein teurer Heiland' for the same reasons." – John Quinn, *Seen and Heard International*

J. S. Bach, *Cantata No. 207*, The Dunedin Consort/Butt (May 2012)

"The gauzy mystery of this aria, unlike anything else in Bach, was caught by the players with delicate care, and bass Matthew Brook sang with a lovely grave eloquence." – Ivan Hewett, *The Telegraph*

Haman (Handel's *Esther*- First Reconstructable Version (Cannons), 1720), The Dunedin Consort/Butt, CD Linn CKD397

Matthew Brook

Selected Reviews

"Brook's performance of the villain Haman's 'Turn not, O Queen' transfixes everyone" – **David Vickers, *Gramophone***

"Brook's noble singing of Haman's (futile) plea for mercy to Esther and his admonitory final aria give the oratorio's villain near-tragic grandeur" – **Richard Wigmore, *Gramophone***

". . . the ear-catcher turns out to be bass-baritone Matthew Brook's Haman: a 'bad guy' whose Act III *accompagnato* would win over the most hardened of juries." – **Paul Riley, *BBC Music Magazine***

Brahms, *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Monteverdi Choir/Gardiner, CD SDG706 (May 2012)

"Matthew Brook's dark-hued baritone is excellent for the role" – **Calum MacDonald, *BBC Music Magazine***

"The baritone Matthew Brook opens 'Herr, lehre doch mich' with a simple eloquence that is very persuasive...The combination of an unaffected solo baritone and period woodwind at 'Ach, wie gar nichts sind alle Menschen' is extremely effective..."
– **Nigel Simeone, *International Record Review***

'Welt, gute Nacht' (J.C.Bach), English Baroque Soloists/Gardiner, CD SDG715 (December 2011)

"Matthew Brook's powerful, richly-hued Wie bist du den, o Gott with its incredible two-octave vocal range"
– **Charlotte Gardner, *Classic FM***

Seneca (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*), Festival del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino/Curtis (June 2011)

"Only Matthew Brook as Seneca, Anders Dahlin as Ottone and Nicola Marchesini as the Nurse had any real grasp of Monteverdian style" – ***Opera Now***

The King of Scotland (*Ariodante*), Il Complesso Barocco/Curtis, Virgin Classics 0 70844-2 (May 2011)

"The Briton Matthew Brook [...] proves himself an outstanding Handel bass as the King of Scotland"
– **Hugh Canning, *International Record Review***

The King of Scotland (*Ariodante*), Il Complesso Barocco/Curtis (Barbican Centre, London May 2011)

"[The] King of Scotland [was] ...sympathetically incarnated in Il Complesso Barocco's concert performance by Matthew Brook...this was a feast of bel canto so delicious as to melt the prejudices of even the most hardened Handel opera sceptics."
– **Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph***

"Matthew Brook [was] a sonorous King of Scotland." – **Richard Fairman, *The Financial Times***

"Matthew Brook made the most of the role of the King of Scotland, his bass deep and emotive...*Invida sorte* was sung with pronounced feeling." – **John E. de Wald, *Opera Britannia***

Kouno (*Der Freischütz*), Opera Comique/Gardiner (Paris, April 2011)

"The singing was first rate...Matthew Brook made an impressive Kouno" – **James Jolly, *Gramophone***

Bach, *Christmas Oratorio*, The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment/ John Butt / (Queen Elizabeth Hall, December 2010)

"Brook's baritone realised the greatest variety of expressive tone-colour" – **Rhian Evans, *The Guardian***

Vaughan Williams, *Sancta Civitas*, Bach Choir/Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra/David Hill, Naxos 8.572424 (May 2010)

"[Vaughan Williams] would have appreciated these fine soloists, chief among them Matthew Brook, who turns anything he sings to gold." – **Stephen Pritchard, *The Guardian***

Matthew Brook

Selected Reviews

"There is infinite compassion, in the third movement ... from baritone Matthew Brook, whose grainy timbre I can best compare to that of a youthful John Tomlinson" – **Piers Burton-Page, *International Record Review***

"Bach and Beyond", Australian Chamber Orchestra/Richard Tognetti (Australia, April 2010)

"Brook's agile bass." – **Clive O'Connell, *The Age***

"animated; especially Matthew Brook (bass), whose delivery is assertive; commanding, even." – **Lloyd Bradford Syke, *The Australian Stage***

**Bach *Mass in B minor*, Dunedin Consort/Butt, Linn Records CKD 354 (June 2010)
Gramophone Editor's Choice (June 2010)**

"Thomas Hobbs and Matthew Brook sing the principal lower-voice contrapuntal passages with sensitive blend and superb intonation: they also declaim their solo movements with confidence and eloquence." – **David Vickers, *The Gramophone***

"Bass Matthew Brook was also outstanding, notably in the striding declamatory bass lines of the Sanctus - he is a singer that manages to draw the audience into his music." – **Andrew Benson-Wilson, *Early Music Review***

Friar Tuck (*Ivanhoe*), BBC National Orchestra of Wales/David Lloyd-Jones, Chandos Records CHAN10578 (January 2010)

"Ho, jolly Jenkin'... spiritedly tossed off by Matthew Brook." – **John T. Hughes, *International Record Review***

"vigorous and spirited rendition of "Ho, jolly Jenkin." – **Faye Courtney, *Opera Britannia***

"very well-sung by Matthew Brook" – **David Laviska, *Musical Criticism***

Handel *Messiah*, Handel and Haydn Society/Harry Christophers (Boston Symphony Hall, December 2009)

"Tenor Tom Randle and baritone Matthew Brook both had powerful, robust voices that served them well at the most dramatic moments." – **David Weininger, *The Boston Globe***

Schubert, *Die Winterreise* (National Centre for Early Music, York July 2009)

"Matthew Brook's bass was heard at its most versatile, not to say intense, in Schubert's song-cycle *Winterreise* (...)The basis of Brook's strength lay in the way he plumbed every nuance of the German poetry, always giving mood and colour priority over mere beauty of tone." – **The Press**

Bach *St John Passion*, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra/Caetani, (Melbourne, March 2009)

"Matthew Brook's arias were rare gems of poignant phrasing rested in dramatic accuracy." – **Daniela Kaleva, *Australian Stage***

Bach *Mass in B minor*, Collegium Vocale Gent/Herreweghe, (Alice Tully Hall, New York, March 2009)

"Matthew Brook, a bass with a clear and agile voice" – **Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times***

**Polyphemus (*Acis and Galatea*), Dunedin Consort/Butt, Linn Records CKD 319 (November 2008)
Disc of the Month (*The Gramophone*), Opera & Vocal Disc of the Month (*Classic FM Magazine*), CD of the Week (*The Observer*), First Choice Recommendation by CD Review's Building a Library (*BBC Radio 3*)**

"The tremendous Matthew Brook combines power and pathos as Polyphemus." – **The Guardian**

"The monster Polypheme in a monstrously satisfying performance by Matthew Brook: one of the most compelling giants on disc in Handel's *Acis and Galatea*." – **Andrew McGregor, *BBC Radio 3 CD Review***

Matthew Brook

Selected Reviews

"Brook presents an undiluted paradox of naive tenderness, convivial clumsiness and grotesque lust."

–David Vickers, *BBC Radio 3 Building a Library*

"Matthew Brook's Polyphemus is extrovert, powerful and amusing, but also arouses pity and tenderness from the listener in 'I rage, I melt, I burn'." –David Vickers, *The Gramophone*

"...a brilliant bass, Matthew Brook (Polyphemus)." –Hugh Canning, *The Sunday Times*

"Matthew Brook's Polyphemus steals the show. His is a comic, Falstaffian portrayal with leering portamento and cavernous low notes. His runs are dark laughter in 'O Ruddier than the Cherry' while the soprano recorder mocks his volcanic pomposity."

–*Classic FM*

"Polyphemus has a wide vocal (and psychological) range... Matthew Brook faces up to a real challenge, not only from the composer's demands but also from the long line of distinguished basses who have sung the role in the past. He covers the wide vocal range impressively, bringing individuality to his assumption, and has the ability so to colour his phrasing that each of those three initial verbs ['I rage, I melt, I burn'] is appropriately shaded." –*International Record Review*

"Matthew Brook's rumbustious Polyphemus" – *BBC Music Magazine*

Bach *Christmas Oratorio*, Monteverdi Choir/Gardiner, (Spitalfields Winter Festival, December 2008)

"Matthew Brook gave a lusty account of that gift of a bass aria, 'Grosser Herr, o starker König' –Geoffrey Norris, *The Telegraph*

Polyphemus (*Acis and Galatea*), Dunedin Consort/Butt, (Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, October 2008)

"Oh ruddier than the cherry', rendered with jovial relish by Matthew Brook, was the high point of an amorous, intimate, wistful evening..." – *The Herald*

Brahms *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Schütz *Requiem*, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique/Monteverdi Choir/Gardiner (Edinburgh International Festival, August 2008)

"A deeply humane and tender contribution from the baritone Matthew Brook" – *The Times*

Handel *Israel in Egypt*, Scottish Chamber Orchestra/Haïm (Edinburgh International Festival, (August 2008)

"Matthew Brook gave us the old bass fervour" – *The Times*

Vaughan Williams *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Philharmonia/Richard Hickox, Sadler's Wells (June 2008)

"Matthew Brook was an excellent Watchful" – *The Times Literary Supplement*

"Matthew Brook's unaccompanied singing in the role of Watchful was a moment to treasure as Act I concluded."

– *The Opera Critic*

"To have voices of the quality of Matthew Rose, James Gilchrist and Matthew Brook as a mellifluous trio of shepherds was luxury casting; all three brought distinctively differentiated and characterful contributions to their alternative roles – as Watchful, Brook's singing the text of Psalm 121 (...) was one such moment." – *Classical Source*

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Dunedin Consort/John Butt, Linn Records Linn CKD 313 (March 2008)

"the outstanding Christus of Matthew Brook...Brook's 'Mache Dich', prefaced by perhaps the most assuaging recitative in musical history, is little short of masterful with the range of colour, risk and gentle courtesy he brings to this superlative emblem of unswerving faith" – *The Gramophone*

"Matthew Brook's powerful Jesus" – *The Independent*

Matthew Brook

Selected Reviews

"The central pairing, Evangelist Nicholas Mulroy and Christus Matthew Brook, are excellent... Returning to the excellent Matthew Brook, his singing of the recitative and aria at the end ('Am Abend da es kühle war' & 'Mache dich, mein Herze, rein') is comparable to the very best." – *Seasonal Matters*

"...led by...Matthew Brook's forthright, very human Christ..." – *The Daily Telegraph*

"the strong, individual Matthew Brook, who portrays Jesus as commanding and vulnerable. Brook is also allotted 'Mache Dich', one of the sweetest and most heart-warming accounts." – *Classical Source*

"...Matthew Brook's clean and earthy Jesus." – *The Scotsman*

Bach *St John Passion*, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Queen Elizabeth Hall (February 2008)

"Bass-baritone Matthew Brook was outstanding." – *The Guardian*

Handel *Messiah*, Dunedin Consort/John Butt, Linn Records Linn CKD 285 (December 2006) Gramophone Award Winner 2007

"Matthew Brook's virile bass is outstanding" – *The Times*

"...an authoritative bass in Matthew Brook" – *The Guardian*

"... the outstandingly good bass Matthew Brook." – *The Sunday Telegraph*

"...bass Matthew Brook sings as if his life depends on it." – *Gramophone*

"Matthew Brook is a most impressive bass. He has a sonorous, dark timbre, but all the agility one could want in ornaments and in the more florid sections." – *Berkshire Review*

Sullivan *Trial by Jury*, BBC National Orchestra of Wales/Richard Hickox, Chandos CHAN 10321 (June 2005)

"Matthew Brook's gloriously mangled pseudo-aristocratic vowels as Counsel for the Plaintiff are guaranteed to induce helpless mirth." – *The Telegraph*

Mozart *Requiem*, Chamber Orchestra of Europe/Nigel Short, Warner Classics 2564-60191-2 (July 2004)

"Matthew Brook invests the 'Tuba mirum' with a proper sense of awe." – *International Record Review*

Handel *Messiah*, The Sixteen, Barbican/St John's, Smith Square, London (December 1999)

"Matthew Brook stood out as a soloist prepared to engage the text with individuality." – *The Independent*