
Matthew Brook

Selected Reviews

Bach *St Matthew Passion* (Christ), RIAS Kammerkoor (April 2025)

"...while the bass Jesus, Matthew Brook, demonstrated his majesty, artistic and vocal prowess..."

- Justo Romero, *Beckmesser*

"Bass Matthew Brook portrayed Jesus with a voice of noble timbre."

- Manuel Muñoz, *msn.com*

Bach *St John Passion* (Christ), Dunedin Consort, Mandel Hall Chicago (November 2024)

"Brook was even finer. His Christ was commanding and yet warm. His solo arias "Betrachte, meine Seel" and "Eilt, ihr angefochtenen Seelen" were perhaps the most emotionally satisfying of the evening. The former was almost lullaby-like in its gentleness; the latter was thunderous."

- John Y. Lawrence, *Chicago Classical Review*

Handel *Orlando* (Zoroastro), Academy of Ancient Music, Barbican (June 2024)

"...the fine bass Matthew Brook"

- Nicholas Kenyon, *Telegraph******

"Matthew Brook was authoritative as Zoroastro... Attired here in a magus-like black, Zoroastro is given the opening aria ("Renounce love and follow glory!") normally reserved for the titular hero. Brook was excellent... Handel kept back that display [coloratura] for Zoroastro's final aria, where Brook was very impressive – magic indeed."

- Roy Westbrook, *Bachtrack*****

"As for Matthew Brook's hands-off magician... [he] blossomed into the formidable bass acrobatics of pieces such as "Sorge infausta una procella"."

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

Puccini *Gianni Schicchi* (Simone), Grange Park Opera (June 2024)

"There is a top-class set of smarmy relatives including Matthew Brook..."

- Nicholas Kenyon, *Telegraph******

"The grasping relatives were all well cast, especially Matthew Brook's Simone..."

- Melanie Eskenazi, *MusicOMH*

Schumann *Das Paradies Und Die Peri*, Royal Northern Sinfonia, The Glasshouse (April 2024)

"The top-notch team of soloists set the seal on a terrific collective effort... Matthew Brook's mellifluous bass."

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

Bach *St Matthew Passion* (Christus), Dunedin Consort, The Queen's Hall Edinburgh (March 2024)

"Matthew Brook's Jesus is an interpretation for the ages (as affirmed recently by David Nice in reviewing a superlative Dublin Matthew Passion). It's hard to imagine the part more sympathetically or beautifully sung: he sang with agony in the garden and even a touch of heroism before Caiphas, and overall it's an interpretation brimming with empathy and humanity. He brought all those qualities to deeply moving performances of the last two bass arias, too." - Simon Thompson, *The Arts Desk******

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Bach *St Matthew Passion* (Christus), Irish Baroque Orchestra (March 2024)

"It was theatrically of a piece with the intensity of Matthew Brook – no haloed icon of a Christus, but an anguished human being also conveying the fullest emotional range, and ending with such tenderness, joy and compassion in "Mache dich, mein Herze, rein". The emotional culmination of the epic came in his supremely powerful "Eli, Eli, lama Sabathani?"

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

CD Recording: Handel *Messiah*, The English Concert and John Nelson (November 2023)

"Bass Matthew Brook has great presence as always in his wide-ranging numbers" – Lindsay Kemp, *Gramophone*

CD Recording: Purcell *Dido and Aeneas*, La Nuova Musica (Pentatone) (September 2023)

"The recording ... with Fleur Barron as Dido and Matthew Brook as Aeneas...sizzles with energy."

- Berta Juncus, *BBC Music Magazine*****

"Matthew Brook's Trojan prince is rightly portrayed not just with an air of importance but with chutzpah, which I found quite fitting given the events that follow."

- Azusa Ueno, *The Classical Review*

Purcell *Masque of Night* (Sceptic, Samuel), Opera North (October 2023)

"...outstandingly stylish singing especially by ... Matthew Brook as Samuel" - Nicholas Kenyon, *The Telegraph*

"It's a smash hit... both Xavier Hetherington and Matthew Brook relished their various roles."

- Melanie Eskenazi, *MusicOMH*

"Both Matthew Brook and Andri Björn Róbertsson made strong baritone contributions in a variety of cameos."

- Martin Dreyer, *Opera Magazine*

"...profoundly moving prison scene with Hetherington and Brook using *O, I'm sick of life* leading to the chorus' striking rendition of *Hear my prayer, O Lord*."

- Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*

Mozart *The Magic Flute* (Speaker of the Temple/1st Priest/2nd Armed Man), Edinburgh International Festival (August 2023)

"Matthew Brook made a terrifically authoritative Speaker."

- Simon Thompson, *The Times*

"Matthew Brook ... intoned impressively in the temple scenes"

- Andrew Clark, *Opera Magazine*

Handel *Ariodante* (Il Re di Scozia), Opéra national de Paris, Palais Garnier (April 2023)

"... a remarkable partner in the person of bass-baritone Matthew Brook in the paternal role (the King). Through his voice, his way of inhabiting the space, it exudes royal dignity and juggles with a rich expressive palette: bonhomie, joy, touching paternal love, despair or inflexible rigor."

- Georgiana Hatara, *Bachtrack*

"Then we become acquainted with a King of Scotland of solid maturity (Matthew Brook)"

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– Jean-Luc Claret, *ResMusica*

"Matthew Brook embodies a King of Scotland of great nobility, with powerfully projected bass."

– Yves Jauneau, *Forum Opera*

"The King of Scotland is performed with wise authority by bass-baritone Matthew Brook, whose timbre is justly noble."

– Emmanuel Deroeux, *Olyrix*

"Matthew Brook, in the role of the King, portrays a father who is both severe but loving, very hieratic and solemn."

– Nathanaël Eskenazy, *Première Loge*

"His father (Matthew Brook), with an impressive presence, paints a noble, jovial and human portrait of the King of Scotland. Agile (what vocalizations!), nuanced, masterful throughout its range."

– Benedict Palaux Simonnet, *Crescendo Magazine*

Handel *Messiah*, The English Concert & John Nelson, Coventry Cathedral (November 2022)

"Matthew Brook's brilliantly delivered solo (his 'The Trumpet Shall Sound')...The bass Matthew Brook was another singer who managed Handel's perilous semiquaver melismas perfectly (the 'shake' passages in 'This saith the Lord of hosts', and in 'Why do the nations so furiously rage together?')"

– Colin Clarke, *Seen and Heard International*

Bach *Mass in B minor*, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, BBC Prom 57 (August 2022)

"...much of the performance radiated an uplifting sense of joy. Among the soloists... Matthew Brook an effective bass"

– Richard Fairman, *Financial Times******

"Behind the warmly authoritative bass-baritone of Matthew Brook in *Quoniam tu solus sanctus*, Roger Montgomery's horn solo proved tender, yearning, wistful... The trumpet-enriched *Et resurrexit* leapt into thrillingly new life, and Brook's *Et in Spiritum Sanctum* had an ardent serenity that mixed well with Katharina Spreckelsen's beautifully coloured oboe solo."

– Boyd Tonkin, *The Arts Desk******

Haydn *The Creation*, Handel and Haydn Society Boston (May 2022)

"The orchestra and Brook vividly portrayed the tiger's leaps, the nimble stag's dashing, and the noble steed's impatient neighing. ... "[i]n long dimensions creeps with sinuous trace the worm." Brook inspired many a smile and chuckle by plumbing the bottom of his vocal range and displaying a wormlike mien. He continued, however, with alacrity into the extroverted aria "Now heav'n in fullest glory", negotiating its plentiful coloratura with agility and assurance."

– Geoffrey Wieting, *The Boston Musical Intelligencer*

Bach *St Matthew Passion* (Pilate), Carnegie Hall (April 2022)

"Another standout was Matthew Brook, who during Part I was chameleonic in arias attached to Judas and Peter but in Part II took a solemn turn: first in "Komm, süß Kreuz," then in "Mache dich, mein Herze, rein," which he sang soothingly, with the rocking phrases of a lullaby. That aria was all the more moving for how unforced its sentiment was. The "St. Matthew Passion" is more meditation than melodrama, and this reading carried that belief to the final measure — its dissonance barely held, the slightest tension resolving with the grace of the restfulness it's meant to reflect."

– Joshua Barone, *The New York Times*

Haydn *The Creation*, Winchester Cathedral, Winchester Music Club (November 2021)

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"Throughout all his [Matthew's] solos he showed operatic skill in characterising text by subtle changes in vocal timbre and dynamics. These were three flawless individual artistes."

- **Derek Beck, *Hampshire Chronicle***

"But bass-baritone Matthew Brook's performance will linger longer in memory. The powerfully built Brook, who has sung professionally for nearly four decades, bolstered the strength of his vocal performance with dramatic facial expressions that reflected the profundity of the Biblical verses he was singing."

- **Bob Benenson, *Third Coast Review***

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

"The soloist is the bass-baritone Matthew Brook, a Dunedin stalwart, who brings a compelling honesty to music and words. ...the grainier nature of Brook's performance, with its moments of vocal vulnerability mixed up in the beauty of it all, has an immediacy that gets to the work's essence."

- **Erica Jeal, *The Guardian********

"...bass Matthew Brook's rich tone underlines the anguish and sounds a reassuring solidity in the final triumphant bars."

- **Oliver Condy, *BBC Music Magazine********

"Every element in 'Ich habe genug' feels just right – ...the) cathartic fulfilment of divine promise in Matthew Brook's endearing truthfulness."

- **David Vickers, *Gramophone***

"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***

CD Recording: *Purcell Birthday Odes for Queen Mary*, The King's Consort (September 2021)

"...dramatically sung by David de Winter and Matthew Brook..."

- **Anthony Pryer, *BBC Music Magazine********

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

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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*

"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"

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- Ismael G. Cabral, *Ópera 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*

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,

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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 mellifluously 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)

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"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*******

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***

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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***

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***

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"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***

"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***

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***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 gutsy 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 angefochtenen 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)**

"Matthew Brook found an ideal balance between humor and profundity."

– **David Allen**, *The New York Times*

Matthew Brook

Selected Reviews

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*