
Richard Burkhard

Selected Reviews

Sullivan *The Pirates of Penzance* (Major-General Stanley), Opera Holland Park (August 2021)

“With effortless style, Richard Burkhard pattered precisely through the Major-General’s tongue-twisters and cut a touching figure as his clockwork oomph began to unwind.” – Peter Reed, *Opera Magazine*

“If I’ve heard the ingénue lead sung this well only rarely, in the case of Richard Burkhard’s Major-General Stanley I can safely say never. This under-valued baritone, last seen as Faninal in Garsington’s *Der Rosenkavalier* is one of the UK greats and should be celebrated as such. He had a giant clockwork mechanism in his back (yes, he was a toy soldier) and needed winding up at key moments to help get him through his flawless patter song. Brilliant.” – Mark Valencia, *Bachtrack*

Strauss *Der Rosenkavalier* (Faninal), Garsington Opera (June 2021)

“Richard Burkhard’s nervy, robustly sung Faninal” – Hugh Canning, *The Sunday Times*

“Richard Burkhard’s Faninal was a more sympathetic figure than usual, his aspirations more sad than contemptible, and his singing nobly rather than ingratiatingly phrased.”

– Melanie Eskenazi, *MusicOMH******

“Among the smaller parts, Richard Burkhard was a hilariously parvenu, resonantly sung Faninal...”

– Hugh Canning, *Opera Magazine*

CD: Eccles *Semele* (Juno), Academy of Ancient Music, AAM012 (January 2021)

“Richard Burkhard and Helen Charlston mine some divine comic scenes as the king of the gods and his jealous wife Juno.”

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

“Richard Burkhard, assigned the opera’s most Italianate music, sounds slightly inhibited reassuring Semele in his first aria but quickly grows in ardour.”

– *Gramophone*

“Richard Burkhard brings to Jupiter the suavity of voice and silky touch of the seducer, giving the delicious “Lay thy doubts” the lightness of spirit it needs. “

– *Opera Magazine*

“Richard Burkhard captures Congreve’s sensual yet thoughtful Jupiter, texturing every word.”

– *BBC Music Magazine (Recording of the Month)*

“...leading to a lovely duet with Jupiter (the excellent Richard Burkhard), ‘If this be Love’.”

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- Colin Clarke, *Rhinegold*

Weill *Street Scene* (Harry Easter), Opéra de Monte Carlo (February 2020)

"Harry Easter (abusive boss, Sam's rival) is unpleasantly sweet, clingy and dances to perfection thanks to Richard Burkhard."

- Florence Lethurges, *Ôlyrix*

"Richard Burkhard proves to be excellent at Harry Easter"

- Emmanuel Andrieu, *Opera Online*

Eccles *Semele* (Jupiter), Cambridge Handel Opera Company (November 2019)

"All the vocal soloists were excellent... The baritone Richard Burkhard was a convincing Jupiter, smooth and resonant"

- Sandra Bowdler, *Opera Magazine*

Weill *Street Scene* (Harry Easter), Teatro Real Madrid, BelAir Classiques DVD BAC162 (November 2019)

"... the slick sophisticated economy of actor-singers such as the baritone Richard Burkhard, outstanding as Rose's predatory boss."

- Christopher Webber, *Opera Magazine*

Magazine

Wolf-Ferrari *Il segreto di Susanna* (Count Gil), Scottish Opera (September 2019)

"Clare Presland and Richard Burkhard reprised their roles from Opera Holland Park's summer production with beguiling vivacity and charm"

- Rowena Smith, *The Guardian*****

Wolf-Ferrari *Il segreto di Susanna* (Count Gil), Opera Holland Park (July 2019)

"...the leads are beautifully played by Richard Burkhard and Clare Presland"

- Hugh Canning, *The Times*

"Designs by Takis establish an atmosphere of postwar dolce vita, and alongside two wholly engaging principals — Richard Burkhard alternately blustery and burnished as Gil, and Clare Presland's kittenish, beguiling Susanna"

– Richard Bratby, *The Spectator*

"Richard Burkhard neatly layered Gil's jealous outrage with moments of pure lust for his exasperating wife; his singing steered clear of simple caricature and both singers knocked sparks off each other in their blazing row, one of opera's finest"

- Peter Reed, *Opera Magazine*

"Clare Presland and Richard Burkhard bounced well off each other throughout the innocent shenanigans of secret

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smoking..."

- Francis Muzzu, *Opera Now*

Mozart *The Magic Flute* (Papageno), Scottish Opera (May 2019)

"Richard Burkhard sings beautifully as Papageno, making him more than a mere comedian..."

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

"Richard Burkhard is a hilariously charismatic Papageno, whose terrible jokes, popular culture references (yes, even Coronation Street gets a mention) and fourth-wall bashing audience acknowledgment makes for wonderful theatre."

- William J A Parker, *Opera Guide Scotland******

"The Magic Flute's music is well known, and in a very decently sung production, Richard Burkhard reprised his role in a splendid central crowd-pleading performance as a charming Papageno, clowning gloriously with his bells."

- David Smythe, *Bachtrack*****

"The comic genius of Mozart's work is probably best personified by Papageno, beautifully characterised and sung by Richard Burkhard as the cocky, cheeky birdcatcher, who acts as the earthy everyman as we move through this story. He is a vaudeville showman - witty and vulgar at the same time, and he effortlessly breaks the fourth wall to conspire with and amuse the audience in pantomime style. It's the way this character moves across the stage and uses the sets that highlights the fluid and subtle choreography of the whole piece...Burkhard as Papageno deftly steals the show..."

- David Petherick, *Edinburgh Festival******

"It's little wonder The Magic Flute remains one of the most popular operas, thanks to its accessible, almost pantomime like, moments – in this production skillfully delivered by Richard Burkhard's cheeky, charming yet lovelorn Papageno. Burkhard's intermittent breaking of the fourth wall to make quibs and jibes makes the audience feel all the more included in the unfolding japes and caused ripples of laughter throughout the opera."

- Rowan Anderson, *Art Mag*

"...his hilarious sidekick Papageno (Anglo/Swiss baritone Richard Burkhard on delightful form)..."

- Mark Brown, *Herald Scotland*

"Threatening to bring the house down, however, is Richard Burkhard, whose lovelorn yet jovial Papageno overflows with warmth, wit and charm."

- Kelly Apter, *The Scotsman*****

"The new cast was altogether classier than in 2012... It boasted a real communicator in Richard Burkhard's Papageno, never over-egging the humour..."

- Andrew Clark, *Opera Magazine*

Puccini *Gianni Schicchi* (title role), Opera North (February 2019)

"Burkhard is a brilliant Schicchi, firm-voiced, a lovable rogue even if – as he shrugs off in his spoken epilogue – Dante did consign him to hell for this deceit."

- Mark Pullinger, *BachTrack*****

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“Richard Burkhard’s Schicchi commanded the stage, his firm baritone brooking no opposition. He duped the lawyers with a credible imitation of the deceased whose will he was co-opted to rewrite” - **Martin Dreyer, *Opera Magazine***

Puts *Silent Night* (Lieutenant Horstmayer), Opera North (December 2018)

“Outstanding among the large cast were...and Richard Burkhard (...German lieutenants).”

- **Hugh Canning, *The Times***

“Lieutenants Audebert (Quirijn de Lang) and Horstmayer (Richard Burkhard) are the most ambivalent characters in the piece – both intelligently acted and splendidly sung...”

- **Ron Simpson, *Reviews Hub***

Handel *Solomon* (Levite), The Royal Opera House (October 2018)

“...while tenor and baritone, Ed Lyon and Richard Burkhard, give us Zadok (yes, the priest) and a Levite. They sound wonderful, the singing never forced, the voices simultaneous powerful yet fragile, as ever giving me the impression of being on the edge of human capacity for sound creation. It’s a thrill all right.”

- **Gary Naylor, *Broadway World***

“Richard Burkhard was a solid, stentorian Levite.”

- **Melanie Eskenazi, *MusicOMH*******

“The small role of the Levite actually opens the evening, so pressure was high on Richard Burkhard (who was also making his Royal Opera debut here). His ‘Praise ye the Lord’ was lyrical and tender, a wonderful song beautifully realised.”

- **Colin Clarke, *Seen & Heard International***

Wagner *Parsifal* (Amfortas), Saffron Opera Group (September 2018)

“Amfortas piles on the agony so much that the role seems much longer than it actually is, and Richard Burkhard’s account powerfully sustained the illusion. His monologue moved from cultivated lyricism and intimacy to some superbly managed delirium, and he rose to the occasion for Wagner’s demands for ‘terrible ecstasy’ in Act 3.”

- **Peter Reed, *Opera Magazine***

“Richard Burkhard’s Amfortas was the revelation of this performance. Thoroughly prepared his was an anguished and deeply moving performance that was thoughtfully sung with a compelling, resonant baritone voice.”

- **Jim Pritchard, *Seen & Heard International***

Mozart *Die Zauberflöte* (Speaker), Garsington Opera (June 2018)

“Richard Burkhard, James Creswell, and Lara Marie Müller deliver the parts of the Speaker, Sarastro, and Papagena with warmth and conviction.”

- **The Independent**

“The second act, while scenically less interesting, is musically outstanding thanks to the luxury casting of Richard

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Burkhard as the Speaker..."

- *What's on Stage*

Verdi *Falstaff* (Ford), Garsington Opera (June 2018)

"Master Ford, outstandingly well sung by Richard Burkhard, could be an early-20th-century railway mogul."

- *The Sunday Times*

"Richard Burkhard's full-blooded Ford is thrillingly alive with anger and jealousy, a self-made wealthy Victorian industrialist with a strong look of Gene Wilder."

- *BachTrack*

"The other character who dominates the evening is Ford, played by Richard Burkhard, the opposite of the usual deceived husbands sinking into absolute tragedy. Very comfortable vocally with his well-planned baritone voice, he expresses subtle nuances and a particularly convincing a whole range of feelings, especially in his duet with Falstaff or in the overall scenes."

- *Forum Opera*

"The cast is uniformly strong, with Waddington's own performance being matched by an equally engaging one from Richard Burkhard so that Falstaff and Ford's scene together in Act II becomes something special."

- *MusicOMH*

"Richard Burkhard is Ford, the Victorian gentleman of new money in this production and consequently less of an immediately appealing character than Falstaff, but Burkhard steers his performance with consistency and conviction, showing Ford in the end to be the type of man who would increasingly come to dominate in the social and political world of the 20th century."

- *Seen & Heard International*

"The other principals were excellent. The crispest enunciation, the best Italian and huge rhythmic positivity was coming from Richard Burkhard in the role of Ford."

- *The Arts Desk*

"He is supported, moreover, by an exceptionally strong cast. Dunleavy's Alice makes a vibrant and commanding foil to Richard Burkhard's explosive Ford, whose aria of jealous rage is delivered with his body literally crumpling with impotence."

- *The Independent*

"Just as compelling, especially when exploding with rage at his wife's supposed infidelity, is Richard Burkhard's Ford."

- *The Times*

"Baritone Richard Burkhard, an artist who never ceases to astonish, is unrecognisable as the jealous Ford, a man it can be dangerous to cross. Bewigged and attired like Gene Wilder's Willy Wonka, Burkhard's delivery of "È sogno o realtà?" bristled with rage and brimmed with technical brilliance."

- *What's on Stage*

Handel *Solomon* (Levite), The Royal Opera House (January 2018)

"...Richard Burkhard's Levite was full of character"

- *The Arts Desk*

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Leoncavallo / Pagliacci (Tonio), Opera North (October 2017)

“...and the ever-excellent Richard Burkhard as devious a Tonio as you could ever want.”

- *Chronicle Live*

“The prologue and last line were sung in English, the rest in the original Italian, with Richard Burkhard’s fiercely caustic Tonio stoking up the already fervid emotional temperature. He became quite a menacing figure, skulking on the sidelines waiting for Canio to exact revenge on his behalf.”

- *Opera Magazine*

“As Tonio, the spurned suitor who turns upon Nedda, Richard Burkhard makes a suitably diabolical puppet master, particularly in the scene where he dresses up the other characters as stock figures from commedia dell’arte.”

- *British Theatre Guide*

“Richard Burkhard, who delivered the prologue and final words in English (the rest being sung in Italian) made a strong Alfio, stepping neatly through the fourth wall to give us a powerful prologue, and proving both controlled and disturbing in the closing scenes.”

- *Planet Hugill*

“Tonio (Richard Burkhard), dressed as Taddeo in the commedia dell’arte being rehearsed, walks on to the stage with a Sainsbury’s carrier bag and coffee cup, as the curtain drops down to reveal a PR photo of the entire cast in their ‘civilian’ clothes. He delivers his opening prologue in English, advising us to be mindful of the semblances we are to behold, and then the stage is alive with colour and motion, as the chorus and principal characters begin their rehearsals. This was a bravura opening...”

- *Seen & Heard International*

“Richard Burkhard, ever a pleasure to hear, makes a remarkable baddy (he earned panto-style boos at the end) precisely because he’s not a hunchback caricature, but someone you can believe in.”

- *The Arts Desk*

“But Leoncavallo’s opera proves strong enough to withstand such idiosyncrasies, especially given the confident commitment of vocal performances led by Peter Auty’s troubled Canio, Elin Pritchard’s vibrant Nedda, Richard Burkhard’s venomous Tonio and Phillip Rhodes’ sensitive Silvio.”

- *The Stage*

“...the always-charismatic Richard Burkhard plots jealously as Tonio.”

- *What’s On Stage*

“The Prologue alone is sung in English, with Richard Burkhard’s determined Tonio stoking up the already fervid emotional temperature. He becomes quite a menacing figure, skulking on the sidelines while waiting for Canio to exact revenge on his behalf.”

- *Daily Echo*

“Still, the central thrust of this sole real masterpiece of verismo hit one powerfully, from the superbly delivered prologue by the Tonio of Richard Burkhard to the final despairing cry that the comedy is over.”

- *The Spectator*

“Richard Burkhard, Elin Pritchard and Philip Rhodes are both vocally and dramatically convincing as Tonio, Nedda and Silvio, and Tobias Ringborg conducts with the fierce brash energy that this crude score requires.”

- *The Telegraph*

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“... Richard Burkhard is grippingly sardonic as the Iago-like stage director, delivering the opening prologue and killer last line in English, directly to us.”
- *The Times*

“It was a stroke of genius – to begin the play within a play with Tonio (Richard Burkhard) singing in English, with impeccably clear diction, and then go straight into the original Italian for the rest of the action.”
- *Yorkshire Post*

Leoncavallo *Zazà* (Cascart), Opera Holland Park (July 2017)

“Best of the bunch was Richard Burkhard as Cascart, Zazà’s kind, patient ex, whose baritone was warm and easy throughout.”
- *Opera Magazine*

“The supporting cast was strong: the outstanding warmth of Richard Burkhard’s baritone and the ease with which he shaped his lines made him an ideal fit for Zazà’s ex-lover Cascart”
- *BachTrack*

“...but for me the night went to the baritone Richard Burkhard as Zazà’s former lover, partner in her double act, and mentor. Each of his numbers is a high point, sumptuously sung, sympathetic in character, focused and authoritative. Zazà should have stuck with him.”
- *Culture Whisper*

“Only one singer makes the grade: the baritone Richard Burkhard, whose nuanced, vocally warm portrait of Cascart, Zazà’s former lover, gives us just a hint of what this opera, in more assured directorial hands, could have been.”
- *Financial Times*

Times

“As Cascart, Richard Burkhard is a model of consistency from the outset displaying his strong and secure baritone to excellent effect.”
- *MusicOMH*

“In fact, the two real star turns apart from Zazà herself are ...and an astonishingly strong vocal performance of Cascart, Zazà’s ex-lover, by Richard Burkhard, a singer who can coax out the most ravishingly tender phrases (his aria, “Zazà, piccolo zingara”) while exuding real stage presence at all times.”
- *Seen & Heard International*

“...Richard Burkhard is outstanding as Zazà’s long-suffering ex-lover and chief handkerchief-carrier, Cascart.”
- *The Daily Mail*

“Richard Burkhard makes an outstanding Cascart, Zazà’s worldly wise if occasionally jealous ex, to whom Leoncavallo allots some of the best music in the score.”
- *The Guardian*

“As Cascart, Richard Burkhard found the perfect balance for the role in all respects, lending his music an understated (while vocally generous) reading, and creating the most sensitive and sympathetic figure of the evening.”
- *The Opera Critic*

“...Richard Burkhard as her kindly co-star and old flame Cascart, whose warm, eloquent singing gave the whole sorry story its core of integrity.”
- *The Spectator*

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“...if the audience’s sympathies go anywhere, it’s to Richard Burkhard’s generously sung and tenderly vulnerable Cascart.”
- *The Times*

“Richard Burkhard, by contrast, was magnificent as Zazà’s sympathetic ex-lover-turned-confidant, her co-star Cascart. His burnished baritone is an unsung national treasure. And a plethora of detailed cameos from the strong supporting ensemble ensured that the opera’s chaotic public side had zip and swagger.”
- *What’s On Stage*

Handel *Radamisto* (Tiridate), Northern Ireland Opera (May 2017)

“Richard Burkhard’s Tiridate was fulminating and flouncy.”
- *Opera Magazine*

“Richard Burkhard did his usual brilliant turn as the villain in a part that could have been written for him...”
- *Critics Circle*

“Richard Burkhard’s resonant baritone is mesmerising, as is his delightfully cartoonish, over the top portrayal of king Tiridate.”
- *The Arts Review*

Tchaikovsky *Queen of Spades* (Tomsy), Opera Holland Park (August 2016)

“Richard Burkhard’s Tomsy provided a lively counterpoint to Herman, notably in the light relief offered by his ballad at the card table.”
- *Opera Magazine*

“Yet production aside the robustly lyrical singing of Richard Burkhard as Count Tomsy ... showed serious quality”
- *Mark Ronan*

“There is excellent work from the supporting cast, particularly Richard Burkhard as Count Tomsy , whose tale of the Countess’s secret of the three cards sparks off Herman’s obsession.”
- *The Express*

“Top honours went to Richard Burkhard as Tomsy, who brought the action to life in Act I with his “Once in Versailles” with its famous refrain of “Tri karty” as he unwittingly sows the seeds of Herman’s dementia by telling the tale of the three cards. In Act III’s drinking song “If pretty girls could fly like birds”, Burkhard once again showed the vocal and stage presence to grab the audience and carry us along with him.”
- *BachTrack*

“Richard Burkhard was a characterful Tomsy, excelling in his star turn aria”
- *Seen & Heard International*

“The smaller roles are cast from strength... Richard Burkhard’s Tomsy is witty, impish and snide...”
- *The Guardian*

“...but Richard Burkhard’s Tomsy has such charisma that he lights up the stage”
- *The Independent*