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BEN JOHNSON – TENOR

Alfredo *La traviata* / English National Opera Cond. Roland Böer / dir. Peter Konwitschny

“Ben Johnson's voice seems to have developed an even finer expressive sheen to it than before, this was one of the most beautifully crafted accounts of the role of Alfredo that I have heard.....My emphasis on the beauty of timbre should not blind you to the emotional depth of Johnson's performance too. At the moment you are still aware of Johnson's careful control, you never felt he was in danger of letting go the way the greatest exponents of this role have done.”

Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*, February 2015

“Johnson, elegant yet intense, is impeccable.”

Tim Ashley, *Guardian*, February 2015

“Johnson's Alfredo has sweet poignancy...”

Michael Church, *Independent*, February 2015

“... his intelligent, warm singing is certainly on the credit sheet.”

Neil Fisher, *Times*, February 2015

“Ben Johnson was the cardigan-clad Alfredo – somewhat small of stature but with a large enough – and sweet-sounding – lyrical tenor voice.”

Jim Pritchard, *Seen and Heard International*, February 2015

“Lyric tenor Ben Johnson's geeky shy Alfredo is impressive and has grown in projection and tenderness...”

Eric Page, *Gscene*, February 2015

Britten *War Requiem* / Royal Academy of Music Symphony Orchestra / Royal Festival Hall Cond. Marin Alsop

“The tenor was Ben Johnson, already well established in his career, whose vocal beauties and musicianship were evident in his wrenching “What passing bells”, which sets up Britten's Latin/Owen dislocation with admirable ferocity, and his thread of pianissimo in the “One ever hangs” element of the ‘Agnus Dei’ was captivating. He completely understood how the Owen settings impose their urgency on the out-of-time Requiem liturgy, and he had all the attributes to express this.”

Peter Reed, *Classical Source*, November 2014

Szymanowski Symphonies Nos 1 and 3 / BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus / CD: Chandos

Cond. Edward Gardner

“Edward Gardner's BBC SO recordings of Szymanowski's orchestral works are among the best, and Chandos's engineering does wonders for the modernist, if lush, textures, the jewelled orchestration and the exotic orientalism of the Third Symphony (The Song of the Night), and the beautiful *Love Songs of Hafiz*. Johnson is a fine soloist here, while Gardner's forces are ecstatic in these near masterpieces”

Hugh Canning, *Sunday Times*, November 2014

“That magical moment where the solo tenor voice (Ben Johnson) floats in at the start of part 3 is exquisitely judged, heralding delicate images of nature and surging climaxes in which Gardner whips up the BBC chorus and orchestra into waves of elated passion. Johnson has the central role

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in "Love Songs of Hafiz" and, cruelly high though the line sometimes lies, occupies it with telling emotional panache."

Geoffrey Norris, *Daily Telegraph*, November 2014

"Ben Johnson... is very much responsive to the text's meaning"

David Patrick Sterns, *Gramophone*, December 2014

"Ben Johnson exhibits a pure tone and faultless intonation, and his high singing in 'Die Perlen meine Seele' (The Pearls of My Soul) is especially memorable."

Ben Hogwood, *Classical Source*, January 2015

"Ben Johnson's fine-grained English tenor delivers the text in cleanly articulated German...The final song, 'The Tomb of Hafiz', is a wholly coherent and masterly treatment of an extraordinary poem."

David Gutman, *International Record Review*, December 2014

Oronte *Alcina* / Barbican Hall and Carnegie Hall

English Concert / cond. Harry Bicket

"Morgana... comes crawling back to Oronte, sung here earnestly by the agile lyric tenor Ben Johnson."

Anthony Tommasini, *New York Times*, October 2014

"There were great performances... Ben Johnson as Oronte, nicely uppity, yet wonderfully touching in which he realises how much he still loves Anna Christy's Morgana"

Tim Ashley, *Guardian*, October 2014

"... Ben Johnson's lyrical Oronte."

John-Pierre Joyce, *Music OMH*, October 2014

"Ben Johnson displayed a fine vigorous tenor voice which very much suited the music.... Johnson combined robustness with a fine technique and a lovely feeling for Oronte's bewilderment..."

Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*, October 2014

Don Ottavio *Don Giovanni* / Glyndebourne

Cond. Andrés Orozco-Estrada / dir. Jonathan Kent

"...Ben Johnson shows skill in shaping the first of Don Ottavio's arias"

Richard Fairman, *Financial Times*, June 2014

"With Ben Johnson and Brandon Cedel both bringing unusually effective character to the parts of Don Ottavio and Masetto"

William Hartston, *Daily Express*, June 2014

Tamino in *The Magic Flute* / English National Opera

Cond. Gergely Madaras / Dir. Simon McBurney

"Ben Johnson's meaty tenor served well for Tamino."

Erica Jeal, *Opera Magazine*, January 2014

"Ben Johnson's Tamino was lyrical and warm."

Sam Wigglesworth, *One Stop Arts*, November 2013

"A strong cast was led by Ben Johnson, lyrical as the yearning Tamino..."

Fiona Maddocks, *Guardian*, November 2013

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"Ben Jonson's homely Tamino is exquisitely sung..."

Michael Church, *Independent*, November 2013

"Ben Johnson delivers his aria of enchantment at Pamina's portrait with a forcefulness verging on the heldentenor-esque..."

David Nice, *The Arts Desk*, November 2013

"Ben Johnson's Tamino did just about everything right. Especially impressive was the ring of heroism in his sound, the extra weighting and darkening achieved without any sacrifice of lyric beauty. He grows with every performance."

Edward Seckerson, *Edward Seckerson blog*, November 2013

"Ben Johnson sang a dignified account of Tamino's portrait aria."

Rupert Christiansen, *Daily Telegraph*, November 2013

"Ben Johnson gives heroic weight to the role of Tamino."

Nick Kimberley, *Evening Standard*, November 2013

"Major plaudits to a terrific cast. Ben Johnson is a superb Tamino - his voice better suited to this role than it was to Alfredo in *La Traviata* - open-toned, focused and deeply musical. Devon Guthrie's feisty, heart-breaking Pamina matched him turn for turn."

Jessica Duchon's *Classical Music & Ballet Blog*, November 2013.

"The finest singing came from Ben Johnson as Tamino."

Michael Tanner, *Spectator*, November 2013

"Ben Johnson as Tamino sang superbly throughout..."

William Hartston, *Daily Express*, November 2013

Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Op.31* / English Chamber Orchestra / Cadogan Hall

Cond. Paul Watkins

"Watkins played with marvellous articulation throughout – the triplets at "Blow, bugle, blow" (in Tennyson's 'Nocturne') were as clean as I can ever recall hearing them – and the singer matched him all the way, not least in the cruel run at "excellently bright"..."

...Johnson's sinuous voice..."

Mark Valencia, *Classical Source*, August 2013

"Johnson's spitting rendition of the "thousand horses out of breath" and the terrifying "partridge's cry" added some real verve to the creepy atmosphere."

One Stop Arts, August 2013

Britten *Serenade for tenor, horn and strings* / Trafalgar Sinfonia / St Martin in the Fields

Cond. Ivor Setterfield

"Singing with a full toned lyric voice, Johnson displayed an admirably supported sense of line combined with a very fine feeling for the words. The way he shaded his voice at the top in the opening of the first two verses was lovely."

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Finally Johnson sang 'Waft her, Angels' from Handel's *Jephtha*. This was simply magical, as Johnson's feeling for line combined with his powerful sense of the text to create a strongly evocative performance..."

Robert Hugill, *Planet Hugill*, August 2013

BBC Cardiff Singer of the World / Winner: Audience Prize

"English tenor Ben Johnson... put together an imaginative programme based around sonnets, including pieces by Britten, Schubert, Parry and Liszt..."

Classical Music, July 2013

"Many thought the song prize should rightly have been awarded to Ben Johnson, representing England, for his outstandingly sung programme of sonnets, culminating in a beautifully introverted performance of Liszt's *I Vidi in Terra Angelici Costumi*. In the event, he was awarded the audience prize, richly deserved."

Guardian, June 2013

"...highly-rated English tenor Ben Johnson was at his best in Britten, especially 'O might these sighes and teares'. Interestingly in a song competition, he was the only one to perform a song by the greatest of song composers – Schubert, in Sonett 1."

South Wales Argus, June 2013

"The Dame Joan Sutherland Audience Prize – voted for by not only the Cardiff audience but also people watching and listening on radio and TV – went to the English tenor Ben Johnson whose performance in the Song Prize final was rated highly by commentators and critics. He takes home £2,000 prize money and a Welsh crystal trophy. Speaking after the announcement, Johnson said: 'I was very emotional when I heard my name announced - I was a bit tearful actually because it was a surprise. The responses that I've had from the audiences all week have been very moving and a little unexpected. People have been saying lots of kind things in the street and they've obviously gone home and voted - and I'm really thrilled and humbled by that.'"

Classical Music, June 2013

"...all five finalists – not to mention the winner of the Dame Joan Sutherland Audience Prize, tried and tested English tenor Ben Johnson – would grace any opera house in the world with at least one of the characters whose arias they adopted..."

The Arts Desk, June 2013

"Twenty-nine-year-old English lyric tenor Ben Johnson won the popular vote and the £2,000 Dame Joan Sutherland audience prize. He saved his best for the song prize final with a performance of sonnets by various poets set to music by Britten, Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, Schubert and Liszt and in the process certainly gave Barton a run for her money."

Morning Star Online, June 2013

Benjamin Britten: *The Canticles* / Ben Johnson & James Baillieu / CD: Signum Classics

"The team of musicians is led by the tenor Ben Johnson who is intelligent, clear of enunciation and entirely without pretension."

Johnson is at his best in *Still Falls the Rain*, and in *The Death of Narcissus*, in writing that reveals the strength and changing colours throughout his tenor register – just as Britten had intended with the voice of Peter Pears for whom these works were originally imagined."

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BBC Music Magazine, July 2013

"Though I risk perpetuating the very attitude I'm pleased to see fading away, occasionally Ben Johnson (who studied with Pears's pupil, Neil Mackie) reminds me instead of the great Welsh tenor, Richard Lewis. The Italianate edge to his voice, which served him so well in his recent Donizetti and Verdi outings with English National Opera, rings out in the opening stanzas of *Canticle I* (My Beloved Is Mine) as he embarks on an interpretation of Francis Quarles's mystic text that is tender, prayerful and entirely devoid of mannerisms. The tone is thereby set for probing accounts of the five *Canticles* that in four cases at least are close to ideal."

Mark Valencia, *Classical Source*, June 2013

The Best of Gilbert and Sullivan / RLPO
Cond. John Wilson

"...tenor Ben Johnson cooled the mood and atmosphere in a sweet performance of "Is life a boon?" from *The Yeoman of the Guard*.

Johnson's two brief comic arias were well sung, and his rich, clear tenor voice was well matched with Fox's purity."

Bach Track, July 2013

Tippett *Child of Our Time* / Royal Festival Hall
cond. Ryan Wigglesworth / London Philharmonic Orchestra

"...Ben Johnson's... incarcerated loneliness was poignant"

Colin Anderson, *Classical Source*, May 2013

"...tenor Ben Johnson, the tragic Child of the title, [was] all the more moving for being so restrained."

Tim Ashley, *The Guardian*, May 2013

"However tenor Ben Johnson, who seems to be making a speciality of sensitive, vulnerable characters, made the Boy's bewilderment real..."

Ivan Hewett, *The Telegraph*, May 2013

Recording: Britten *The Canticles*
Signum Classics

"Johnson's impeccable phrasing and subtle control and colouring, this is a superb collection containing some of the most intensely beautiful of all Britten's vocal writing."

Andrew Clements, *The Guardian*, February 2013

Alfredo in Verdi *La Traviata* / ENO
cond. Michael Hofstetter / dir. Peter Konwitschny

"Ben Johnson's Alfredo was the archetypal anorak... His voice sounded ample and evenly produced... he gave evidence of fulfilling the promise of his earlier appearances."

Russ McDonald, *Opera Magazine*, March 2013

"Ben Johnson as his son (and Violetta's flaky suitor) is a marvellous young tenor who does self-pity very well, as he showed in ENO's *The Elixir of Love*, and his restrained account of Alfredo was evidently true to the director's intentions. One day, with luck, he may be given the opportunity to spread his Verdian wings rather more freely".

Mark Valencia, *Whats on Stage*, February 2013

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"Ben Johnson sings beautifully".

Michael White, *The Telegraph*, February 2013

"Ben Johnson's performance as Alfredo is heroic, transcending his impossible character and delivering his arias with heart-rending plangency."

Michael Church, *The Independent*, February 2013

"Ben Johnson sang...throughout with a beautiful voice and clear diction".

Francesca Vella, *Backtrack*, February 2013

"Vocally Winters and Johnson are exceptional. Her performance is a wonderful combination of feistiness and fragility, sung with unflagging intensity; while he continues to be more impressive with every new challenge he takes on".

Andrew Clements, *The Guardian*, February 2013

"Ben Johnson is given a tougher task in this production but shows us how his young voice is really fleshing out and developing. It's a lovely affecting sound and he must look after it through judicious repertoire choices".

Edward Seckerson, February 2013

"Ben Johnson's singing, was ardent, and his share of 'Sempre libera' (sung in the auditorium) made its mark".

Peter Reed, *Classical Source*, February 2013

"Ben Johnson brings clarion-toned Italianate elegance to his nerdy, bookish Alfredo."

Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph*, February 2013

"This young British tenor is a real asset for ENO".

David Nice, *The Arts Desk*, February 2013

"ENO Harewood Artist Ben Johnson sang a terrific role debut as Alfredo. Perhaps the bright timbre of his tenor was at odds with the bookish introvert Konwitschny paints him, but that's hardly his fault. Johnson's stylish phrasing and clear diction were impressive. He was also a sympathetic duet partner, responding and reacting intelligently".

Mark Pullinger, *Opera Britannia*, February 2013

Soloist in Handel *Messiah* / Huddersfield Town Hall

Northern Sinfonia / cond. Martyn Brabbins

"Ben Johnson proved to be one of the most commanding Messiah tenors that I have heard. [I]n his sequence of recitatives and airs in Part Two, he took the initiative and stamped his authority on the performance to a greater extent than tenors sometimes manage in this work".

William Marshall, *The Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, December 2012

Bach *B Minor Mass* / St Martin-in-the-Fields

Trafalgar Baroque Ensemble & New London Singers / cond. Ivor Setterfield

"Tenor Ben Johnson had an incredibly powerful voice which easily filled the vast church, and his *Benedictus* aria was simply sublime".

Billie Hylton, *One Stop Arts*, October 2012

Don Ottavio in Mozart *Don Giovanni*

English National Opera (revival) / dir. Rufus Norris / cond. Edward Gardner

intermusica

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"Ben Johnson [...] sang both arias with admirable flair".

Michael Migliore, *MusicalCriticism.com*, November 2012

"Ben Johnson manages to mine a heroic quality from the character. His voice appears to be getting bigger, and there was plenty of vibrant tone on display. [T]he refinement of his melting "Dalla sua pace" [...] made depriving him of his Act II aria seem all the more egregious".

Steve Silverman, *Opera Britannia*, October 2012

"fine singing from [...] above all Ben Johnson as Don Ottavio".

Michael Church, *The Independent*, October 2012

"Ben Johnson brings elegance and style to Don Ottavio".

Hugo Shirley, *The Telegraph*, October 2012

"Johnson's Ottavio is among the most beautifully sung of recent years".

Tim Ashley, *The Guardian*, October 2012

"There are moments of pure inspiration. Don Ottavio's Dalla sua pace, for example — eloquently delivered by Ben Johnson — was all the more arresting for the expressive slow-motion dancing of three couples in the background".

Barry Millington, *London Evening Standard*, October 2012

"Ben Johnson [is] a beautifully toned Don Ottavio".

Sam Smith, *Londonist*, October 2012

"The absence (as so often) of the aria 'Il mio tesoro' from Act Two is regrettable because Ben Johnson is a fine Don Ottavio".

Mark Valencia, *WhatsOnStage*, October 2012

"Ben Johnson's Ottavio [was] elegantly sung, as ever".

Alexandra Coghlan, *theartsdesk.com*, October 2012

"Ben Johnson's wholesome singing as Don Ottavio manages to create an oasis of sincerity in 'Dalla sua pace' ('When she is smiling')"

Edward Seckerson, *edwardseckerson.biz*, October 2012

Don Ottavio in Mozart *Don Giovanni*

Opéra National de Bordeaux / cond. Mikhail Tatarnikov / dir. Laurent Laffargue

"Ben Johnson is a very noble Ottavio ... he mastered the expressive and vocal range of the role showing no weakness."

Adrien de Vries, *Classique News*, June 2012

Britten: Songs, Volume 1 (Onyx Classics)

"Tenor Ben Johnson attacks the *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne* with command and emotional intensity."

Joanne Sydney Lessner, *Opera News*, February 2012

Rosenblatt Recital

St John's Smith Square / acc. James Baillieu

"On arrival at St John's it was to find that the expected tenor was no longer appearing. Any disappointment was swiftly dispelled however; stand-in tenor Ben Johnson has a fine, bold Italianate voice which quite belies his Hertfordshire roots but amply justifies his already amassed

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honours (including the Kathleen Ferrier Award and membership of the BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists Scheme)."

Martin Cullingford, *Gramophone*, November 2011

Schubert *Schwanengesang*

Recital at Wigmore Hall / BBC Lunchtime Concert / acc. James Baillieu

"Johnson...authoritative and emotive in the sombre songs.

'In der Ferne' was notable for the starkness of its delivery, the "glittering evening star" truly "sinking without hope", while there was a hint of light in 'Ihr Bild', before darkness descended again."

Ben Hogwood, *Classical Source*, October 2011

Nemorino in Donizetti *The Elixir of Love*

English National Opera / cond. Rory Macdonald / original dir. Jonathan Miller / revival dir. Elaine Tyler-Hall

"Ben Johnson's Nerorino started off looking rough and even mildly antisocial, but consciously martened up when Benedict Nelson's over-confidant, god's-gift-in-uniform Sergeant Belcore showed up on the scene; Johnson's suave, carefully-shaped line climaxed in an immaculately delivered 'Una furtive lagrima' which had the audience hanging on his every note."

George Hall, *Opera*, November 2011

"Johnson caused something of a stir as the Novice in Glyndebourne's Billy Budd last year. Nemorino is his first big role for ENO, and he makes a tremendous impression. There's a supple ease to his voice and a stylish elegance to his phrasing. He's an appealing actor, with huge, expressive eyes and a slightly hangdog air: the way he charts Nemorino's transformation from shy nerd to self-possessed lover is wonderfully touching."

Tim Ashley, *The Guardian*, September 2011

"Here this part – which furnished Pavarotti with his signature tune – is sung by the young tenor Ben Johnson in his first big role, and a fine fist he makes of it. Even before he's opened his mouth he's telling us via body-language what a sweet dimwit he is, and his first aria is full of plangent despair."

Michael Church, *The Independent*, September 2011

"Johnson sings with distinction, shaping Donizetti's lines impeccably and holding the house spellbound with his hit number, Una furtiva lagrima."

George Hall, *The Stage*, September 2011

"Ben Johnson (a notable Novice in Glyndebourne's Billy Budd) is a great success as Nemorino, cast here as a love-sick, hick garage mechanic"

"He sang a touching 'Una furtiva lagrima' of unexpected pathos...As well as his lyrical singing, Johnson also looked the part, not so much anonymous as overlooked, and with a brave little Elvis quiff indicating that he's at least trying to make the best of himself."

Peter Reed, *ClassicalSource.com*, September 2011

"In Ben Johnson's role debut as Nemorino, Shore and Tynan gained a perfect foil. Johnson managed to tread the fine line between loser and superhunk: his tenor was gloriously free across the entire register, his reading of the opera's hit aria, 'Una furtiva lagrima' (here, 'I saw a tear fall from her eye') truly luxurious."

Flora Willson, *MusicalCriticism.com*, September 2011

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"Meanwhile, Ben Johnson captures the hangdog hopelessness that eventually breaks her heart.

Ben Johnson rises winningly to the challenge of his big showpiece (Una furtive lagrima in the original: "One furtive teardrop"), an aria that seems to carry more weight than the opera can bear, yet which always wrenches the heart."

Nick Kimberley, *London Evening Standard*, September 2011

"ENO has been quick to pinpoint Ben Johnson as that rare phenomenon, an English tenor who can sing Italian bel canto like a native. This gifted young singer, so striking as the Novice in last year's Glyndebourne *Billy Budd*, shines like a new star as he combines his exquisite, unforced vocal line with a shambling comic touch that eluded his predecessor in the central role of Nemorino."

Mark Valencia, *WhatsOnStage*, September 2011

"Ben Johnson has had big success in competitions, and one can hear why, since his is a sensitively used tenor...capable of both volume and sweetness when required."

Melaine Eskenazi, *musicOMH*, September 2011

"Proving himself capable of filling the Coliseum stage with his personality, Ben Johnson (making his major role debut at ENO) delighted the audience with his deftly characterised Nemorino, all quirky gestures and beaten-down optimism."

Alexandra Coghlan, *The Arts Desk*, September 2011

Bridge *Blow out you bugles*

BBC National Orchestra of Wales / BBC Proms / cond. François-Xavier Roth

"Valiant performances from tenor Ben Johnson, conductor Francois-Xavier Roth, and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales."

Michael Church, *The Independent*, August 2011

"Not the least considerable from his substantial body of songs, Frank Bridge's setting of Rupert Brooke's elegiac *Blow out, you bugles* (1918) seems better served in its piano guise, for all that Ben Johnson drew no mean eloquence from within the prevailing portentousness."

Richard Whitehouse, *Classical Source*, August 2011

Britten: *Complete Songs Vol 1* / acc. Malcolm Martineau

CD Onyx (B004UVCP44)

"Another attraction here is the opportunity to sample some of Britain's best young singers...Ben Johnson, whose strong and intense singing of *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne* nails his colours to the Britten mast with impressive authority."

Richard Fairman, *Gramophone*, September 2011

"... Ben Johnson gives an aptly salonesque performance of Britten's Wordsworth setting, *Lucy*... And Johnson gives a deeply thoughtful reading of *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne*."

Hilary Finch, *BBC Music Magazine*, July 2011

"The John Donne sonnets (Ben Johnson)...are very fine."

Nicholas Kenyon, *The Guardian*, June 2011

'Ben Johnson: New Face' / Feature in *The Telegraph*

"His sound and style is rich, warm and Italianate – more Pavarotti than Bostridge."

The Telegraph, July 2011

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**Recital with Geraldine McGreevy and Martin Hässler
Klavierfestival am Ruhr / acc. Graham Johnson**

"It was not only due to the pianist's overall concept, but also thanks to the singers that the audience experienced astonishment, recognition and enjoyment, and that this concert was entertainment in the best possible sense of the word. (...) Ben Johnson used his characterful voice to great effect. (...) With his effortless, ringing tone, Ben Johnson created a faint, otherworldly atmosphere for *Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh*, and a dramatic, operatic sheen for Liszt's *Der du von dem Himmel bist*."
Martin Schrahn, *Der Westen*, June 2011

**Novice in Britten *Billy Budd*
Glyndebourne Festival Opera / cond. Sir Mark Elder / dir. Michael Grandage**

"... the youthful Ben Johnson [is] a touching Novice."
Roger Pines, *International Record Review*, July/August 2011

"It was left to the bit players, Iain Paterson's impressive redburn and Ben Johnson's heart-breaking novice in particular, to hold the narrative together."
Ashutosh Khandekar, *Opera Now*, May 2010

"Of key roles it's almost invidious to single anyone out but one should mention the trio of senior officers, Matthew Rose's Flint, Darren Jeffrey's Ratcliffe, and the ever-impressive Iain Patterson as Redburn. And further down the food chain, Ben Johnson's affectingly sung Novice."
Edward Seckerson, *The Independent*, May 2010

"The smaller roles are uniformly well taken, with Jeremy White as Dansker, Ben Johnson as the Novice and Matthew Rose, Iain Paterson and Darren Jeffrey as the three officers all outstanding."
Andrew Clements, *The Guardian*, May 2010

"The award-winning young tenor Ben Johnson makes his mark as the Novice"
Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph*, May 2010

"And Ben Johnson is striking as the sadistically humiliated Novice"
Richard Morrison, *The Times*, May 2010

"Each cameo role in the all-male ensemble cast takes on personality and musical character, especially Ben Johnson's Novice"
Fiona Maddocks, *The Guardian*, May 2010

"Ben Johnson's anguished Novice is a haunting creation, broken by punishment and transformed into the drama's Judas."
Michael Church, *News Scotsman*, May 2010

**Berlioz *Nuits d'été*
Les Azuriales Festival**

"A trio of outstanding British voices – David Kempster and Sarah-Jane Daives as the lovers, Ben Johnson as the butler – shared the songs with distracted, slow-burning intensity."
Michael White, *Opera Now*, November 2009

**Bach B Minor Mass / Tewskbruy Abbey
Rodolfus Choir / cond. Ralph Allwood**

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"Tenor Ben Johnson's *Benedictus*, with flute accompaniment, was a joy to listen to and created a sublime aura of peace."

Roger Jones, *Musicweb International*, August 2009

**Handel's *Messiah* / Burford Parish Church
Cotswold Chamber Orchestra / cond. Brian Kay**

"Tenor Ben Johnson set the standard with his opening recitative and solo, Comfort ye/Every valley, both delivered with passion and conviction, and sung in gloriously warm, honeyed tones."

Nicola Lisle, *The Oxford Times*, April 2009

**Handel's *Messiah* / St. David's Hall, Cardiff
Cardiff Polyphonic Choir / cond. Neil Harris**

"...tenor Ben Johnson - awarded this year's Kathleen Ferrier prize - brought a dramatic edge to his recitatives"

Rian Evans, *The Guardian*, December 2008

**Aceste in Mozart *Ascanio in Alba*
Classical Opera Company / cond. Ian Page**

"Big things beckon....for the tenor Ben Johnson, typically supple and ardent in the bit-part of Aceste"

Neil Fisher, *The Times*, December 2008

Winner of the Kathleen Ferrier Awards 2008 at Wigmore Hall

"Ben Johnson, at 24, was one who greatly impressed me. If Justice roams through the world of music, this young tenor should have a successful career."

John T. Hughes, *Classical Music Source*, April 2008

**Title role in Britten *Albert Herring*
British Youth Opera / dir. William Kerley / cond. Peter Robinson**

"Johnson's portrayal was masterly."

Michael Church, *The Independent*, September 2007

"Ben Johnson's raptly sensitive rendition of the title role"

Neil Fisher, *The Times*, September 2007