

# pressquotes

## THOMAS HOBBS - TENOR

### **Priest of the Israelites in Handel *Esther* / Wigmore Hall cond. John Butt / Dunedin Consort**

"Handel was generous with some of the secondary roles, too, giving fine arias to... the First Israelite and the Israelite Boy – opportunities Thomas Hobbs... seized enthusiastically."

George Hall, *Guardian*, April 2013

"For pure eloquence, the high tenor line of the First Israelite's aria, "Tune your harps to cheerful strains" took some beating. Thomas Hobbs' vocal line achieved a perfect legato against pizzicato strings and an obbligato oboe – he excelled again in his brief contribution to the central act."

Colin Clarke, *Seen and Heard International*, April 2013

### **Bach *Weihnachts-Oratorium* / Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, New York City and Symphony Hall, Montreal**

#### **Collegium Vocale / cond. Philippe Herreweghe**

"...tenor Thomas Hobbs, who was a fine Evangelist"

James R. Oestreich, *New York Times*, December 2012

"Thomas Hobbs' lyric tenor was particularly effective for the Evangelist, with natural declamation and high notes of honeyed delicacy."

Scott Cantrell, *Dallas News*, December 2012

"Young English tenor Thomas Hobbs was the star of our solo quartet. He seems a natural narrator, with a way with words that tells the story with nuance and colour without drawing attention to anything unnecessarily. He doubtless makes a fine Evangelist in the Passions, yet his arias were also highlights here. "Frohe Hirten, eilt, ach eilet" combined a comforting mid-range with accurate runs and trills, whilst the final aria of the concert, "Nun mögt ihr stolzen Feinde schrecken" displayed his fine attention to both text and music alike."

David Allen, *Bach Track*, December 2012

"...the best moments of the night came in two careful aria duets between musicians and soloists. Frohe Hirten danced wonderfully between tenor Thomas Hobbs and flutist Patrick Beuckels..."

Lev Bratishenko, *The Montreal Gazette*, December 2012

"But it is tenor Thomas Hobbs...who stole the show. The power and the color of [his] voice thrilled the audience and, when at last the audience were permitted to cheer, the applause exploded."

Martin Prévost, *pieuvre.ca*, December 2012

"...tenor Thomas Hobbs made his presence felt with a dynamic Evangelist"

Caroline Rodgers, *La Presse*, December 2012

### **Handel *Messiah* / The Sage, Gateshead Northern Sinfonia / cond. Matthew Halls**

"...tenderness came out in some of the solos too, beginning with tenor Thomas Hobbs' very moving "Comfort ye my people", a performance that was full of compassion and expressiveness. I also enjoyed his "Thou shalt break them in pieces", which was beautifully fluid. As the aria that immediately precedes the Hallelujah Chorus this is a tough moment for the soloist, who must hold the audience's attention when they're all waiting for the excitement that follows, and Hobbs carried it off with style".

Jane Shuttleworth, *Bach Track*, December 2012

### **Recording: Bach *Ach süßer Trost!* Leipzig Cantatas (LPH006) Collegium Vocale / cond. Philippe Herreweghe**

“For me, the real surprise of the recording was the tenor Thomas Hobbs. As can be heard in his aria in BWV 105, ‘Kann ich nur Jesum mir zum Freunde machen’, his pure tone, full of youthful ardour, and his assured technique are ideal for Bach.”

Andrew O’Connor, *International Record Review*, March 2013

“Of the soloists, tenor Thomas Hobbs is outstandingly expressive and vocally at ease.... this is Bach at his most inventive, in a sensitive and polished performance.”

George Pratt, *BBC Music Magazine*, January 2012

“...and the supple-voiced British tenor Thomas Hobbs also impress[e]d.”

Richard Morrison, *Times*, December 2012

**Bach B minor Mass / Rheingau Musik Festival  
cond. Morten Schult-Jensen / Immortal Bach Ensemble**

“The marvellous soloists [including] the brilliant English tenor Thomas Hobbs were rewarded with a standing ovation.”

*RheinMainTaurus–Onlinemagazin*, September 2012

**Recording: Bach B minor Mass (Phi LPH004)  
Collegium Vocale Gent / cond. Philippe Herreweghe**

“[Hobbs’] voice is light, clear and easy and, supported by an excellent flautist, his performance of this taxing aria is stylish and most enjoyable.”

John Quinn, *MusicWeb International*, August 2012

“Tenor Thomas Hobbs displays a lovely free-floating high line in the *Benedictus*.”

Robert Hugill, *MusicWeb International*, July 2012

“In the *Benedictus*, Thomas Hobbs sustains an exemplary even tone from top to bottom of his range.”

George Pratt, *Classical-music.com*, July 2012

**Recording: Handel *Esther* (Linn CKD 397)  
Dunedin Consort / cond. John Butt**

“the low voices easily outclassing the high... and Thomas Hobbs making a highlight of the First Israelite’s celebrated ‘Tune Your Harps’.”

Hugh Canning, *International Record Review*, July 2012

“Tenor Thomas Hobbs’ mellifluous ‘Tune your harps’ plucks plaintive heartstrings...”

Paul Riley, *BBC Music Magazine*, July 2012

“Thomas Hobbs sings ‘Tune your harps’ gracefully, abetted by the eloquent oboist Alexandra Bellamy”

Richard Wigmore, *Gramophone*, May 2012

**Handel *Messiah* / Le Concert Lorrain / Saarbrücken  
cond. Andreas Goepfert**

“Der Brite Thomas Hobbs war mit seinem hohen lyrischen Tenor in vielen Rezitativen sofort Herr der Lage.”

“The British lyrical tenor Thomas Hobbs had a commanding presence in his many recitatives.”

*Saarbruecker Zeitung*, March 2012

**Bach B minor Mass / Concertgebouw Bruges  
cond. Philippe Herreweghe / Collegium Vocale Gent**

“Thomas Hobbs very harmoniously completes the quartet with a powerful and charming voice.”

Sébastien Gauthier, *Concerto Net*, January 2012

**Handel *Messiah* / Royal Scottish National Orchestra  
Glasgow Royal / cond. Roy Goodman**

Each of the soloists offered something of real beauty... The clarity with which tenor Thomas Hobbs produced every single phrase was to be enjoyed throughout... characterised by confidence and professionalism.”

Carla Whalen, *Scotsman*, January 2012

**Handel *Messiah* / City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra  
Symphony Hall / cond. Adrian Lucas**

“Thomas Hobbs, demonstrated stylistic awareness and impressive breath control in long phrases (...)”  
David Hart, *Birmingham Post*, December 2011

**Zelenka *Missa dei Filii* and Bach Cantatas / Freiburg Barockorchester  
Berlin Philharmonie / cond. Marcus Creed**

“Part of the miracle which Thomas Hobbs - first among equals of the excellent soloists - proclaimed in his pure, shimmering tenor voice, was that even the most critical listener was moved by the astonishing annunciation of the immaculate conception.”

Carsten Niemann, *Der Tagesspiegel*, December 2011

**Alessandro in Mozart *Il re pastore* / Kings Place  
Classical Opera Company / cond. Ian Page**

“Hobbs revealed himself as a supremely accomplished recitalist, with a warm, full tone and lovely ability to sustain a melodic line”

“...Thomas Hobbs infused the part of Alessandro with benign mischief”

Michael Church, *Independent*, November 2011

“The magnanimous Alexander the Great was sung by a warm-voiced tenor Thomas Hobbs: his bravura arias were dispatched with brilliant control.”

Nahoko Gotoh, *Bach Track*, November 2011

“Sprague’s fellow-tenor Thomas Hobbs brought a touch of the buffo to Alessandro and earned some unexpected laughs along the way...”

Mark Valencia, *Classical Source*, November 2011

**Bach B minor Mass / Collegium Vocale / St John’s Smith Square  
cond. Philippe Herreweghe**

“(...) the dramatically convincing and vocally flexible tenor soloist, Thomas Hobbs”

*Esslinger Zeitung*, May 2011

“(...) the lovely interplay of solo flute and Thomas Hobbs’ tenor in the ‘Benedictus’.”

*Financial Times*, May 2011

**Telemachus in Monteverdi *Ulysses*  
English National Opera / cond. Jonathan Cohen / dir. Benedict Andrews**

“(...) this Ulysses...has the sublime consolation of the recognition of his son (superbly performed by Thomas Hobbs)”

*The Spectator*, April 2011

“With fine support from younger voices... Thomas Hobbs as a vocally exquisite Telemaco.”

Michael White, *Daily Telegraph*, March 2011

“Thomas Hobbs’s Telemaco [is] glitteringly sung.”

Michael Church, *Independent*, March 2011

Tenor Thomas Hobbs (Telemaco) is blessed with a beautiful Mozartian voice...”

Agnes Kory, *Musical Criticism*, March 2011

“Other roles are cast from strength, with Thomas Hobbs’s warm full tenor as Telemachus standing out for sheer vocal quality.”

Rupert Christiansen, *Daily Telegraph*, March 2011

“The cast combined experienced ENO regulars... with newer talent (notably Thomas Hobbs as Telemaco...) to gripping and traumatic effect.”

Fiona Maddocks, *Observer*, March 2011

"It was an evening of fine tenors, with... Thomas Hobbs all poised lyricism as Telemaco, Ulysses son."  
Alexandra Coghlan, *New Statesman*, March 2011

"...Telemaco (nobly sung by Thomas Hobbs)"

Richard Morrison, *Times*, March 2011

"The young tenor Thomas Hobbs made an auspicious ENO debut as Telemachus."

Melanie Eskenazi, *Music OMH*, March 2011

"Thomas Hobbs fulfills his golden-toned promise as a recent RAM student as the royal son Telemaco."

Simon Thomas, *What's On Stage*, March 2011

"Thomas Hobbs as his son reveals a fine tenor."

Sam Smith, *Londonist*, March 2011

"...Thomas Hobbs in a touching turn as Ulysses's son, Telemaco... Hobbs deserves particular praise for his part in the second most moving moment of the night: the stunningly quiet reunion with his father Ulysses."

Igor Toronyi-Lalic, *The Arts Desk*, March 2011

**Tenor Soloist *Unexpected Meetings: The Operas of Haydn*  
Classical Opera Company / cond. Ian Page**

"Hobbs' voice mingles elements of English choirboy, Italian lover and full-blooded Haydn hero. He opened with a show-stopping ten-minute aria from *Acide*, 'La beltà che m'innamora', finding fresh colours and moods for each repeated stanza... he produced some lovely tone in his middle range"  
Amanda Holloway, *Opera magazine*, March 2011

" 'La beltà che m'innamora' from *Acide* (Haydn's first opera) featured the wonderfully secure tenor of Thomas Hobbs - strong of voice yet lyrical and very secure at speed. He excelled again at the other end of the first half in an aria from *L'incontro improvviso* ('Indarno m'affanno ... Deh! Se in ciel'), a Turkish-tinged piece which, alas, showed some of the insecurities of using natural horns. His wit was to the fore in the catalogue aria 'Ho viaggiato in Francia' (*Orlando Paladino*), where a 'patter' element worked wonderfully."

Colin Clarke, *MusicWeb International*, January 2011

"Tenor Thomas Hobbs had us laughing at 'Ho viaggiato in Francia' from *Orlando Paladino*, a crazy catalogue song, written six years before Mozart adopted the form for Leporello on *Don Giovanni*, and one that hilariously lists nations, not conquests, in a manic pretence at well travelled heroism by a hungry squire trying to impress a shepherdess in return for a square meal. Earlier Hobbs had beguiled us with a beautifully sung melody from *Philemon und Baucis*, an opera Haydn wrote as a sophisticated "voiceover" for the opening of his patron Nicolaus Esterházy's new marionette theatre."

Stephen Pritchard, *Observer*, January 2011

**Recording: Monteverdi *Vespro della Beata Vergine (1610)* (Novum NCR1382)  
Choir of New College, Oxford; Charivari Agréable / cond. Edward Higginbottom**

"Thomas Hobbs showed how such music should be sung"

Andrew O'Connor, *International Record Review*, October 2010

**Bach B minor Mass / Dunedin Consort**

"Thomas Hobbs' Benedictus is gloriously lyrical"

George Pratt, *BBC Music Magazine*, July 2010

**Evangelist in Bach *St Matthew Passion*  
Birmingham Bach Choir / cond. Paul Spicer**

"Thomas Hobbs (delivered) this massive role with absolute conviction, in a voice that ranged from soaring sweetness to dark, tear-choked sorrow. He was tremendous, and he, more than anyone, gave this performance its devastating impact."

*Lichfield Mercury*, April 2010

"As was Thomas Hobbs' tremendous performance as the Evangelist, sung with a radiant tone and astonishing range of vocal characterisation."

Richard Bratby, *The Birmingham Post*, April 2010

"Thomas Hobbs, as the Evangelist (delivered) this massive role with absolute conviction, in a voice that ranged from soaring sweetness to dark, tear-choked sorrow. He was tremendous, and he, more than anyone, gave this performance its devastating impact."

*This is Tamworth*, April 2010

### **Albert in Britten *Albert Herring***

**Royal Academy Opera / cond. Nicholas Kok / dir. John Copley**

"As the gormless Albert, Thomas Hobbs admirably conveys the awkward demeanour of an apron-tied lad with a lot to learn."

Geoff Brown, *Times*, March 2010

"From amongst the strong cast, Thomas Hobbs in the title role stands out. His stunning tenor voice is consistently ethereal, although never so heavenly as to stop us from believing that this really is just a small town lad. He also proves a fine actor as his face carries a look of total bewilderment during the May Day festivities, which reminds us that it requires just as much skill to produce comic expressions as serious ones."

Sam Smith, *What's On Stage*, March 2010

"Hobbs has a powerful but pure tenor voice, which he used with musicality and technical assurance...what will stay with me longer is the masterly and wholly credible pathos with which he sang about his fear (of adulthood) in the second act."

Agnes Kory, *Musical Criticism*, March 2010

"Thomas Hobbs made a memorable large, ungainly Albert, sung as well as any of his prestigious predecessors in the role, his body language and facial expressions alive to every moment of his humiliation and resurrection with new found determination to be his own man."

Peter Graham Woolf, *Musical Pointers*, March 2010

### **Haydn *The Creation***

**Manchester Camerata / Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus / cond. Paul Borough**

"Tenor Thomas Hobbs was highly impressive as Uriel with crystal clear diction. The recitative of the creation of day and night, the seasons, years and days was marvellously unfurled and his arias were sung with lyrical warmth."

Bernard Lee, *Sheffield Telegraph*, December 2009

### **Count Alberto in Rossini *L'occasione f ail ladro***

**Royal Academy Opera / cond. Dominique Wheeler / dir. Daniele Guerra**

"As the unfortunate Alberto, Thomas Hobbs provided some of the most enjoyable and accomplished singing of the evening."

Stuart Jenkins, *Musical Pointers*, May 2009

"...The Academy cast was packed with promise...Thomas Hobbs, the Alberto... a Rossini tenor ready to sacrifice seductiveness of timbre to virtuoso accuracy (as Chris Merritt and Rockwell Blake were, as Juan Diego Florez is). His early divisions were accurate...when the aria arrived, the old ideal of 'honeyed elegance' began to inform his performance, and he was winning..."

Andrew Porter, *Opera Magazine*, July 2009

### **Recording: Damon in Handel *Acis and Galatea* (CARUS 83.420)**

**cond. Nicholas McGegan / North German Radio Chorus & Göttingen Festival Orchestra**

"Thomas Hobbs has a bright appealing voice, with considerable agility."

Barry Brenesal, *Fanfare Magazine*, January 2009

### **Haydn *La Fedelta Premiata***

**cond. Trevor Pinnock / Royal Academy Opera**

"These conservatoire productions... offer the public a chance to see rare repertoire and spot rising stars, who always work alongside experienced professionals. Trevor Pinnock conducted a bristling

performance of *La fedelta premiata*... Thomas Hobbs and the rest of this excellent cast are names to watch."

*Observer*, March 2009

"The cast I saw (as usual with students productions, one of two companies), fielded some fine voices. Tenor Thomas Hobbs... stood out... making us feel the future of opera is safe."

*What's on Stage*, March 2009

**Damon in Handel *Acis and Galatea*  
Dunedin Consort**

"The excellent instrumental playing is wonderfully engaging, and particularly enjoyable performance (of)... the very impressive interpretations of young tenor Thonas Hobbs as Damon."

*Sunday Herald*, February 2009

"Thomas Hobbs is a bright Damon."

*Classic FM Magazine*, February 2009

"Thomas Hobbs in the rols of Damon, Acis' companion, is smooth-voiced and neat, with forthright delivery..."

*International Record Review*, February 2009

"...and the impressive young tenor Thomas Hobbs..."

*Scotsman*, February 2009

**Vaughan Williams *On Wenlock Edge*  
Edinburgh Quartet**

"...but does finding the right performers seem worth the effort? With Thomas Hobbs as tenor soloist and Nicholas Ashton as pianist, the answer this week was yes... But Thomas Hobbs's voice was incisive enough to cut through the clutter of what was essentially a piano quintet, and he handled the emotion of the climactic song - the mounting sadness of Bredon Hill - with real intensity."

*Herald Scotland*, April 2008

**Bach *St Mark Passion*  
Whitehall Choir**

"It was, however, the powerful voice of the evangelist, Thomas Hobbs that really made the performance special. He led us through the trails and tribulations with a brilliantly unassuming authority lightly dappling each phrase with the most delicate vibrato. Still only 23, he is a major talent to look out for."

*Daily Telegraph*, March 2007

**Bach *St John Passion*  
Henley Choral Society**

"Of the soloists, Thomas Hobbs gave an outstanding performance in the crucial role of the Evangelist, singing the gospel narrative throughout with a clear unforced voice in excellent German, and bringing out Bach's word-painting to good musical effect."

*Henley Standard*, April 2007

**Monteverdi *Vespers*  
Three Choirs Festival**

"He [Nicholas Mulroy] also combined most effectively with fellow tenor Thomas Hobbs in a marvellously fluent and plangent rendition of 'Duo Seraphim'... Thomas Hobbs... sang the demanding 'Nigra Sum' very well indeed and later on the work he also contributed some crucial and most effective offstage echoes."

*Music Web International*, August 2007

**Monteverdi *Vespers*  
Ex Cathedra / Birmingham Town Hall**

"All deserved credit for their contributions, but none more so than the echoing, virtuosic pair of tenors, Benjamin Hulett and Thomas Hobbs..."

*Birmingham Post*, June 2007