
RECENT NATIONAL PRESS REVIEWS



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Iolanthe, English National Opera 2023

The i ***** 'a triumphant ensemble achievement'

Daily Mail ***** 'delightful evening'

The Guardian ***** 'the spiralling absurdity makes this a delight'

The Stage ***** 'Sparkling'

"The music this time around is, if anything, better than ever. Conductor Chris Hopkins is back to bring real authority to the music" - Daily Mail

"In Chris Hopkins hands the music sparkled. Hopkins speeds were always apposite, the music never dragged or sagged, yet filled the Coliseum. A real treat. Many column inches have inevitably been devoted to ENO's opening production of the season, the revival of David Alden's striking vision of Britten's Peter Grimes. Iolanthe could not be more of a contrast, but it is a testament to the company's strength (and courage in adversity) that this revival full of crisp detail, and wonderfully engaging with the cast's sheer enjoyment shining out." - Planet Hugill

"Chris Hopkins, the ENO's G&S specialist marshalls the considerable forces of the house band with aplomb. He handles the score, with its nods to Mendelsohn and Wagner, with perfect pacing and dynamic control and the pastoral melodic overture with its glorious flute triplets is simply ravishing." - London Unattached

"If the titivations to Gilbert's libretto work, it is because Sullivan's musical values are largely respected. Chris Hopkins conducts buoyantly, reminding us

of the score's fleeting Wagnerian echoes, and even if the love duet, None Shall Part Us, is accompanied by an excess of comic business, Marcus Farnsworth's Strephon and Ellie Laughtarne's Phyllis still preserve its amorous intensity." - The Guardian

"The music throughout is excellent – the classic score played brilliantly by the ENO orchestra under the baton of conductor Chris Hopkins. Of course, the star of the show is the voices onstage, and there are some absolutely stunning performances to be enjoyed." - All that dazzles

"this intensely enjoyable production welds chorus, soloists, and orchestra into a triumphant ensemble achievement" - The i newspaper

"Chris Hopkins deftly conducts the ENO orchestra, giving solid support to singers" - The Stage

Werther, Grange Park Opera 2023

"The Gascoigne Orchestra, conducted by Christopher Hopkins, excelled both in the careful and neat parts of the score, mostly at the beginning, and the episodes of unleashed passion where more really is more. I was particularly taken by the clear and decisive sounds coming from the bass section giving us a deep and strong, unified thrum as the foundation and the punctuation for Act 3 (the printed programme names both Markus van Horn and Caroline Harding as principal, so it could be either?) and in this theatre one could hear that purposeful sound with wonderful immediacy and clarity." - The Arts Desk

"This production of Jules Massenet's Werther, directed by John Doyle, delivers a satisfying serving of full-on Romanticism, cooked to perfection thanks to superb singing and excellent playing by the Gascoigne Orchestra, conducted by Christopher Hopkins." - The Stage 5*****

"In the pit, Christopher Hopkins drew splendid playing from The Gascoigne Orchestra, coaxing out Massenet's rich colouring and, in explosive climaxes,

mirroring the emotional agitation playing above them on-stage. In short, both playing and singing are unmissable, with Werther's dramatic strengths fully realised." Bachtrack

"Christopher Hopkins, conducting the Gascoigne Orchestra, gives us plenty of ominous atmosphere." The Times 4****

Yeomen of the Guard, English National Opera 2022

"The choral singing was bold and colour-saturated; the orchestra, under Chris Hopkins, caught the light and shade of Sullivan's writing – violins glinting in the light while bassoon and clarinet countermelodies sang and sighed within the texture... this was as close to the Yeomen of my dreams as I expect I shall ever see." – Richard Bratby, The Spectator

"Musically, things are in excellent hands. Chris Hopkins conducts Sullivan's score with finesse" – Michael Billington, The Guardian

"Hopkins does an equally fine job of traversing the show's varied musical terrain, which veers from the quasi-Grand Opera of the Act One finale—think ["Don Carlos,"](#) but more dour—to the lighter Bel Canto territory of arias and music-hall patter. Whatever the musical weather, the textures remain crisp and well-crafted and the music is treated with seriousness and care." – Benjamin Poore, Opera Wire

"Conductor Chris Hopkins keeps the full pit in his confident control and the orchestra are in fine mode throughout" – Gscene

HMS Pinafore, English National Opera 2021

"We were finally seeing G&S the way it is meant to be seen: virtuoso musical comedy, bursting with colour and drenched in laughter from a capacity crowd" The Spectator

“This is a super show that looks good, sounds good and by golly will do you good” David Mellor, Mail on Sunday *****

“HMS Pinafore rolls along beautifully under conductor Chris Hopkins' more-than-able steering from a sentimental-brisk Overture to the final happy chorus (the late Charles Mackerras would have approved), and hits all its marks deftly.” – David Nice, The Arts Desk ****

“Musically, this *Pinafore* is most definitely all hit. Chris Hopkins gives the score a bright and breezy workout but is also alert to its potential nuances with a subtle swell here and a romantic lilt there. The ENO Chorus is excellent as well, singing with outstanding clarity and responding with admirable discipline to the challenges thrown at them by McCrystal and by Lizzi Gee's witty choreography.” - Clive Paget, Limelight magazine ****

“Chris Hopkins conducts the orchestra with the energy that you would expect on the last night of the proms... upbeat, punchy, knee bobbing and seamlessly blending with the vocals”- Londonology

“Musically it's very fine. Hopkins keeps things elegant, buoyant and witty.” – Tim Ashley, Guardian

“deftly conducted by Chris Hopkins” - Richard Morrison, the Times ****

“This operatic pantomime is a cut above, even from below decks” - Alexandra Coghlan, iNews ****

“Chris Hopkins conducts with admirable concentration, Arthur Sullivan's timeless melodies as delightful as ever, thrillingly filling the vast auditorium with a full orchestration.” – Gary Naylor, Broadway World

“Arthur Sullivan's score is conducted with rapport and finesse... the orchestra keeps the momentum and the antics under control” - Vera Liber, British Theatre Guide

“A first-class, rollicking production. It's great to see the ENO back at the top of its game with this vibrant take on the Gilbert and Sullivan classic with production values as strong as any West End musical.” - London unattached

“Driving that pizzazz from the pit is Chris Hopkins, with a frisky orchestra of English National Opera, while on stage the spirited ENO Chorus and stupendous soloists give everything they’ve got.” - Claudia Pritchard, Culture Whisper

“Conductor Chris Hopkins secures strong performances from ENO’s willing and able chorus and orchestra.” - The Stage

Gianni Schicchi, Grange Park Opera 2022

“*Gianni Schicchi* - the film of Puccini’s comedy is a musical miracle... The music director Chris Hopkins performs virtuosic miracles” – Richard Morrison, The Times

“Hard to beat as an hour of pure, free fun” - Nicholas Kenyon, The Telegraph

L’heure Espagnole, Grange Park Opera 2021

“Musically it’s extremely fine” - Tim Ashley, The Guardian

“Medcalf and his company hit every beat with clarity and charm, while Chris Hopkins, playing Ravel’s score at the piano fills each passing moment with lightly worn sensuality and precision tooled wit.” - Richard Bratby, The Arts Desk

“The accompaniment is largely just piano, played swooningly, with sufficient Spanish dash by Chris Hopkins that it sounds as if this chamber work, just 50 minutes long, might have been written for that instrument alone.” - Colin Davison, British Theatre Guide

The Mikado, English National Opera 2019

“faultlessly conducted by the excellent Chris Hopkins” London Theatre reviews

“In the pit, Chris Hopkins elicits a beautifully sumptuous and balanced sound from the orchestra, with the consequence that, even at over thirty years of age, Jonathan Miller’s *The Mikado* can still make for a joyous and uplifting evening when executed as well as it is here.” – Sam Smiths, Opera Online