

## Joseph Gaines reviews

### **Opera Philadelphia, Elizabeth Cree**

Terrific as they are, the scene-stealer here is Joseph Gaines, playing one of the music hall stars—he dances, acts, and sings (with a hauntingly heady tenor) with almost insouciant ease, and every word is clear - **Philadelphia Magazine**

The brilliantly written part of the melancholy comic Dan Leno—half Sportin' Life, half Cabaret M.C. , with a superimposed Brittenesque tinta—offered a field day to light tenor Joseph Gaines, who met the challenge with vocal skill and superb physicality - **Opera News**

Tenor Joseph Gaines is spectacular as the music-hall comedian, a triple-threat with his acting, dancing and singing - **DC Metro Theater Arts**

But as good as Mack is—and she is very, very good—the opera is stolen by Joseph Gaines as music hall star Dan Leno, who was a real-life, and still beloved, star from the Victorian era in England. Gaines sings, he acts, he dances. Indeed, whenever Gaines is on stage, everything else revolves around him - **Feast of Music**

...a stellar cast, led by the lush, vibrant mezzo Daniela Mack as Elizabeth, ably abetted by baritone Troy Cook as her husband John and tenor Joseph Gaines in a star-turn as music hall celebrity Dan Leno - **BroadwayWorld**

Tenor Joseph Gaines, as the music-hall comic Dan Leno, was every inch his camped-up real life inspiration, from his Cockney maid persona with braids jutting out from the side of his head to his po-faced corralling of the troupe, when conversation became vulgar, into morally 'higher ground' (a refrain so funny in its mealy-mouthed

respectability, as to give rise to a loud chuckle each time it came around) - **Bachtrack.com**

Threatening to run away with the show, tenor Joseph Gaines is a tour de force as the wiry, wily Dan Leno. Mr. Gaines is arguably one of the finest, most complete singing actors in opera today, and he commanded attention whenever he was on stage. Assuming any number of guises (including uninhibited drag) as a headliner in the music hall segments, he is agile, fleet-footed, energetic and wickedly entertaining. When he drops his performer persona and becomes Leno the man, he is equally capable of engaging our attention with warmly communicated humanity. Moreover, Joe has a wonderfully schooled, innately appealing tenor that is capable of lyricism of considerable beauty - **Opera Today**

Joseph Gaines as Dan Leno will rivet your attention from the moment you lay eyes on him. His nuanced singing, allied with exceptional diction, enhances his terrific stage presence - **Philly Gay Calendar**

The most successful role and performance is that of tenor Joseph Gaines. He portrays a music hall standup comic who is admired by Elizabeth Cree and the rest of London. He may be a whippersnapper, but he is also full of feeling and delivers a particularly touching aria on the woes of the world. Gaines has several voices in which he can sing and brings variety and humor to a story that is essentially dark - **Berkshire Fine Arts**

Joseph Gaines brings unexpected gravitas to the role of comedian Dan Leno, the 'whippersnapper, clog dancer, funny man' - **Theater Jones**

Joseph Gaines, Deanna Breiwick, Matt Boehler, Melissa Parks, and Jason Ferrante make a wonderfully entertaining group of comedians. Their roles are executed with a combination of effective physical comedy and very fine singing. Joseph Gaines is

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## For Singers

especially entertaining, and the role of Dan Leno is a perfect fit - **Schmopera**

### **Opera Philadelphia (The Crypt Sessions), Cree in the Crypt**

As Dan Leno, Joseph Gaines was a standout in the 'Bluebird Song' which he sings disguised as the Duke's housekeeper - **Musical America**

In this finale of the Crypt Sessions' second season, Mack joined with tenor Joseph Gaines and pianist-composer Kevin Puts for perfectly calibrated hour-long concert that made old music sound vivid and a new work sound as if it had been there all along, just waiting to be revealed - **New York Magazine**

Gaines, a tenor with a light, dangerously honed voice and a diabolical stage presence, sang *Tel jour telle nuit*, Poulenc's setting of verse by the symbolist poet of Paul Éluard. An empty shell, a lost flag, nocturnal glimmerings — Gaines didn't miss an opportunity to give each syllable and image its full portion of creepiness - **vulture.com**

Joseph Gaines is a tenor who seems to be able to do anything. He can change his voice within an aria, and use notes to create character. Gaines also can sing perfectly beautifully, which he did in Francis Poulenc's *Tel jour telle nuit*. Visually he hunkers into himself at the end of a song, and then erupts up and straight as he begins anew. He is sinuous, physical and finds humor where he can - **Berkshire Fine Arts**

Puts and Campbell put together a medley of arias and duets from the opera that showcased both Mack and Gaines' voices but also put on display their acting skills as well as chemistry. It also presented the melodic music that Puts has written for the work. The medley was made up of five pieces that were enthusiastically met by audiences - **OperaWire**

The fascinating excerpts of Puts' score (Pulitzer winner with Campbell for *SILENT NIGHT* in 2012), with its chromatic weaving, found a perfect conduit in the velvet authority of flexible mezzo Daniela Mack. She was seconded by tenor Joseph Gaines who skillfully drew her music hall partner Dan Leno - **broadwayworld.com**

Mack sang the title role, while Gaines sang the role of Dan Leno, an old-time Music Hall star. Their chemistry was infectious, and the ovation at the end well-deserved. No doubt I wasn't the only one in the room newly interested in making a trip to Philly this fall - **feastofmusic.com**

### **Resonance Works Pittsburgh, Falstaff**

In addition, the production brought back to town (after too long an absence) the gifted tenor Joseph Gaines, who was delightful as the priggish, uptight Dr. Caius - **The Pittsburgh Tatler**

### **Hawaii Opera Theater, The Tales of Hoffmann**

Also excellent in a multi-character performance was Joseph Gaines, who plays four servants, some bumbling and incompetent, others wickedly sycophantic. His clear tenor cut through the orchestra like a hot knife through butter - **The Honolulu Star-Advertiser**

### **Virginia Opera, Turandot**

Ping (bass-baritone Keith Brow), Pang (tenor Ian McEuen) and Pong (the lively Joseph Gaines) are the court ministers who, tired of the endless bloodshed, reminisce about their peaceful homes and try to dissuade the determined Calaf from accepting Turandot's deadly challenge. Groag gives the trio dimension as individuals as well as comic relief - **The Virginian-Pilot**

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As Shakespeare does in his tragedies, Puccini's libretto and music offers us some comic interludes in the face of Turandot's cruelty. The comic relief comes in the form of a trio of court advisors—Ping, Pang and Pong—that seem to leap from the pages of a Gilbert & Sullivan score to scurry about offering warnings to the “Unknown Prince,” but alternating them with please as to the harm his choices may cause.

Enthusiastically sung by baritone Keith Brown, and tenors Ian McEuen and Joseph Gaines respectively, this trio of Chinese bureaucratic flunkies lightens the mood while also providing a touch of political satire to the proceedings - **CDN**

### **Opera Philadelphia, Turandot**

Providing all of the comic relief in delicious morsels are Ping, Pang, and Pong (Daniel Belcher, Julius Ahn, and Joseph Gaines respectively). As the clowns of the piece, these three also bring an air of world-weariness and wisdom, combining in their style to become a sort of tramp to the darkly intense tale. They wear robes and tassels as you might expect from a traditional telling, but also natty hats and spats in an almost fluorescent palette - **DC Metro Theater Arts**

The trio of ministers, Ping, Pang, and Pong, often depicted as either racial stereotypes or Commedia dell' arte caricatures, were earnestly portrayed by Daniel Belcher, Julius Ahn, and Joseph Gaines - **phindie.com**

### **Utah Opera, Le nozze di Figaro**

Tenor Joseph Gaines, portrayed as a curly gingerheaded Basilio, excelled as a handkerchief carrying dandy—always at the center of intrigue and gossip - **Opera News**

### **Opera Las Vegas, Madama Butterfly**

The role of Goro, the comically cynical matchmaker, who sells Gio-cio San to

Pinkerton was well sung and acted by tenor Joseph Gaines, who was both amusing and sinister - **Las Vegas Review Journal**

### **Opera Colorado, The Magic Flute**

One of the most intriguing aspects of the production is the handling of the problematic role of Monostatos. The character was written as a very negative racial stereotype, but Witzke deftly sidesteps almost all of these aspects simply by having tenor Joseph Gaines wear a ridiculous — but wonderful — costume and replacing references to “blackness” with “ugliness.” Gaines plays the role with villainous delight and was a crowd favorite - **Daily Camera**

### **Opera Philadelphia, Oscar**

Joseph Gaines and Benjamin Sieverding were genuinely pesky and genuinely threatening as Queensberry's agents sent to keep Wilde from enjoying London prior to his sentencing - **Neal's Paper**

### **Central City Opera, Dead Man Walking**

All four singers in the roles of the victims' parents are excellent, including tenor Joseph Gaines and sopranos Karina Brazas and Claire Shackleton, but baritone Robert Orth stands out as the murdered girl's father, a role that could be thankless, but whose perspective is absolutely necessary - **The Daily Camera**

Other, more one-dimensional supporting roles are well handled: Thomas Hammons as the warden; Jason Baldwin as the unsympathetic Father Grenville; Karina Brazas, Claire Shackleton and Joseph Gaines as mourning parents - **Sharps and Flatirons**

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### **Central City Opera, Le nozze di Figaro**

Mezzo-soprano Claire Shackleton, bass Thomas Hammons and tenor Joseph Gaines round out the main cast as troublemakers Marcellina, Doctor Bartolo and Don Basilio. All are excellent - **The Daily Camera**

Each of the artists gives an all-out performance, in both singing and acting; there's not a weak link in the bunch. Soprano Anna Christy as Susanna is charming; bass-baritone Michael Sumuel in his CCO debut is a fine Figaro. The other main characters are Countess - Sinéad Mulhern; Count - Edward Parks; Bartolo - Thomas Hammons; Cherubino - Tamara Gura; Basilio - Joseph Gaines; Marcellina - Claire Shackleton - **Examiner.com**

Strong work from Thomas Hammons as Don Bartolo, Joseph Gaines as Don Basilio, and Julie Tabash as Barbarina - **coloradodrama.com**

Joseph Gaines is channeling a deviant Mr. Clean - **Operagasm**

### **Lyric Fest, Dear March - Come In!**

Singing was excellent. Guests soprano Kiera Duffy and tenor Joseph Gaines were charismatic additions to ever-capable regulars baritone Randall Scarlata and mezzo-soprano Suzanne DuPlantis, all enjoying inspired collaborations with pianist Laura Ward - **The Philadelphia Inquirer**

[Gaines'] style made him a perfect fit for wilder items like Ned Rorem's visit to the mental ward - **The Broad Street Review**

[Gaines'] "Visit to St. Elizabeth's", text by Elizabeth Bishop, setting by Ned Rorem, was memorably harrowing - **Secret Geometry**

### **Utah Opera, Turandot**

The trio of baritone Daniel Belcher and tenors Julius Ahn and Joseph Gaines as Ping, Pang and Pong stole the show with well-choreographed antics, detailed characterizations and an arresting comedic touch. Singing and dancing in long-johns, embossed with Chinese printing, capped with whimsically anachronistic headgear and twirling umbrellas, their quasi soft-shoe "Ho una casa nell'Honan" was a brief but welcome diversion - **Opera News**

Daniel Belcher, Julius Ahn and Joseph Gaines offer charming comic relief, with a surprising thread of humanity, as the bureaucrats Ping, Pang and Pong - **The Salt Lake Tribune**

Daniel Belcher, Julius Ahn and Joseph Gaines were outstanding as Ping, Pang, and Pong - **Opera**

Baritone Daniel Belcher as Ping and tenors Julius Ahn and Joseph Gaines as Pang and Pong, respectively, were outstanding. Their characters bring much needed humor to the story and the three were absolutely on the mark in their singing and characterizations - **Reichel Arts Review**

### **Opera Omnia, Il ritorno d'Ulisse**

In an otherwise fast-paced second act, you had no reason to want to spend so much time with the glutton Irus on his way to his suicide: no reason, that is, apart from the fine singing of Joseph Gaines - **The New York Times**

Karim Sulayman and Joseph Gaines were standouts as Eumaeus and Irus... the highpoint of the opera was Irus' aria prior to his suicide. Gaines was gripping - **The New York Classical Review**

Another supporting character is played by Joseph Gaines, whose role as the beggar Irus is delightful; he exudes an incredibly captivating stage presence - **Frequent Business Traveler**

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## For Singers

As the parasitic Iro, Joseph Gaines delivered a comic performance that climaxed with a moving suicide - **SuperConducto**

### **Opera Theater of Pittsburgh SummerFest, The Tales of Hoffmann**

The entire performance tingled with raw energy... Joseph Gaines exhibited stage-savvy in four comic servant roles - **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**

### **Opera Philadelphia, Die Zauberflöte**

Joseph Gaines embodied a vocally correct servant Monostatos of great theatrical effervescence - **ProOpera**

Joseph Gaines had one of the finest voices - **Philadelphia Inquirer**

The thankless role is well played by tenor Joseph Gaines as something like the hypersexual but unthreatening Dean on Community - **Philadelphia City Paper**

Joseph Gaines's Monostatos was suitably randy - **Broad Street Review**

### **Pittsburgh Opera -- Madama Butterfly**

Joseph Gaines projected Goro's lines meaningfully, making this supporting role a figure to be reckoned with - **Opera News**

I did appreciate Joseph Gaines' portrayal of Goro as fully human. This character can sometimes be played as despicable, but the marriage broker does look out for Butterfly, even desperately trying to arrange a second marriage with the rich Prince Yamadori (Kyle Olivier) that would set

her up for life - **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**

Secondary roles were generally well handled, including Joseph Gaines' colorful marriage broker Goro and Dwayne Croft's agonized Sharples - **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**

### **Lyric Fest, New Journey into Song: A Winter's Journey**

Joseph Gaines, brought in on short notice when the original singer canceled, completely embodied the music with his light tenor, committing body and soul to the music in ways one rarely sees - **The Philadelphia Inquirer**

### **Ars Lyrica Houston -- "La Dirindina" (Sono Luminus Records)**

...word play squeezed for all it is worth by the score and delivered with relish by the young tenor, Joseph Gaines.... there is real testosterone in Gaines' singing, assured and mocking - **CounterPunch**

The three vocalists in 'La Dirindina' are perfectly cast... Gaines' Liscione manages to sound at once smarmy and earnest (see the recitative 'Ma quel che piu pilota'), using a little catch in his voice, a Salieri-esque crackle, and a strong falsetto to great comedic effect - **Early Music America**

Joseph Gaines's Liscione is played to fine comic effect - **Fanfare**

For this recording, Dirst has assembled a fine cast - mezzo Jamie Barton, tenor Joseph Gaines and baritone Brian

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For Singers

Shircliffe - to bring the piece to life -  
**The Houston Chronicle**

## **The Washington Bach Consort, Kings and Commoners**

The tenor Joseph Gaines sang elegantly with a sense of stylistic finesse. His tone contained a wonderful variety of nuances, with the vibrato evenly placed. The projection of his vocal delivery was generous, negotiating the demands of the composer's involved writing with graceful ease -  
**Washington Life**

Besides [Jon] Bruno, the excellent vocal soloists were soprano Rebecca Kellerman Petretta, alto Kristen Dubenion-Smith and tenor Joseph Gaines - **The Washington Post**

## **Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, Candide**

Joseph Gaines matched [Abigail Dueppen's Cunegonde] with his adept singing and playing as Cunegonde's equally superficial and sexually exploited brother Maximilian -  
**Gordon Spencer on WRCT**

## **Pittsburgh Opera, The Abduction from the Seraglio**

Pedrillo received a dramatically decisive interpretation from Joseph Gaines, with more than a whiff of actor David Spade's trademark obsequiousness - **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**

By the time the locomotive pulled into Paris and the Pasha had reluctantly freed the lovers, it was clear that this was one of the most compelling and

visually appealing productions the Pittsburgh Opera has ever staged -  
**Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**

David Portillo and Joseph Gaines made for a delightful pair as the heroic Belmonte and his servant, Pedrillo -  
**Opera Pulse**

## **Apollo's Fire, The Magic Flute**

... music director Jeannette Sorrell and superb colleagues have created a lithe 'Magic Flute' of captivating and touching vibrancy - **The Plain Dealer**

... the two priests who accompany Sarastro (Jeffrey Strauss and Joseph Gaines) sparkled in excellent ensemble singing - **Cleveland Classical**

## **Teatro Grattacielo, I Compagnacci**

Tenor Joseph Gaines took full advantage of his moments as Anna Maria's spurned suitor Noferi - **Opera News**

Joseph Gaines, as the unattractive and rejected suitor, had an amusing delivery of the most memorable tune in the opera - **Opera Today**

## **Central City Opera, Madama Butterfly**

Other standout performances include ... tenor Joseph Gaines who is well-cast as Goro, the creepy and conniving marriage broker - **The Denver Post**

This is - in sum - is Puccini staged by a troupe of masters who bring new insight - and emotion - to the overworked score - **Opera Today**

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There were other commendable supporting roles that went into making this a very emotional and satisfying performance. Among these were Joseph Gaines as the Marriage Broker - **The Weekly Register-Call**

## **Teatro Grattacielo, I Gioielli Della Madonna**

It was terrific fun, and interesting, to hear the full-throttled performance that Teatro Grattacielo presented here, with David Wroe conducting a large and committed cast, the Westfield Symphony Orchestra, the combined Cantori New York and Long Island University Chorus, the Chinese American Children's Chorus, and - essential to the performance - the Due Colori Ensemble of mandolins and guitars - **The New York Times**

The rest of the very large cast were all excellent in their varied roles including Mark Cortale as Biaso, Joseph Gaines as Ciccillo, John Tiranno as Totonno, Damian Savarino as Rocco, Mark Womack and Timothy Birt as two young men and Lawrence Long as the blind man - **Opera-L**

On the strength of the excellent concert performance presented by Teatro Grattacielo at Rose Hall last Monday, Wolf-Ferrari might be worthy of more attention ... The many small roles were cast with Teatro Grattacielo's usual expertise - **Opera Today**

## **Pittsburgh Opera, Le nozze di Figaro**

In the double assignment of Basilio/Curzio, Joseph Gaines's bright tenor cut through the crowd, and he

managed to differentiate the characters effectively - **Opera News**

Joseph Gaines' Don Basilio was wonderfully wooden - **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**

## **The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, The Rake's Progress**

On Thursday night at St. Paul's Ordway Center, the SPCO, Minnesota Chorale, conductor Edo de Waart and seven very impressive vocal soloists performed a "Rake's Progress" that will likely be looked back upon as the triumph of this festival. Impeccably executed with unflagging energy and inspiring musicianship, it not only illuminated the composer's genius, but left the enthusiastic audience debating who deserved the greatest praise for its success - **The St. Paul Pioneer Press**

This was partly due to the excellence of the cast members, who managed not only to relate to one another while standing in front of their music stands but to create believable characters. Continually impressive was William Burden in the title role, displaying a sweet tenor that took on a heroic ring in the climaxes and drawing a compelling, chameleonic character throughout. Heidi Stober was the vocally radiant Anne Trulove, Peter Coleman-Wright the subtle but sinister Nick Shadow, and mezzo Nancy Maultsby a foxy Baba the Turk. Kevin Langan, Judith Christin and Joseph Gaines were excellent in smaller roles - **The Minneapolis Star-Tribune**

## **Pittsburgh Opera, Falstaff**

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Joseph Gaines captured the disdain of the sniveling Dr. Caius well - **Opera News**

Joseph Gaines was a nasty Dr. Caius - **The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**

**Indianapolis Opera, Ariadne auf Naxos**

Joseph Gaines sparkled vocally as Scaramuccio - **Opera News**

**Glimmerglass Opera, Das Liebesverbot**

Glimmerglass Young American Artist Joseph Gaines gave a bright characterization as the toadying Pontio Pilato - **Opera News**

The comic parts were entertaining, especially the contributions of tenor Joseph Gaines as Pontio Pilato (as he says, not that one - **Wall St Journal**

Joseph Gaines, a tenor, was impressive as Pontio Pilato, by turns a flesh peddler and a jailer - **The New York Times**

Tenor Joseph Gaines (one of the Young American Artists) always makes a fine impression, and he relished every moment of his stage time (as did we) with a delectable character turn as "Pontio Pilato." He has a pleasantly clear, well-projected voice, and very good German diction. A committed and concentrated actor, his honest and animated performance was blessedly cliché-free - **Opera Today**

Lauren Skuce's Dorella and Joseph Gaines Pontio Pilato showed vocal skill

and assured comic presence - **The Boston Musical Intelligencer**

Among Shakespeare's character Pompey (another outspoken advocate of lust) is here renamed Pontio Pilato (one wonders what was going through the young Wagner's mind) and Joseph Gaines gives a vivid portrayal - **concertonet.com**

Joseph Gaines as Pontius Pilate (one of the opera's few good jokes lurks behind the name) was channeling Stanley Tucci in *The Devil Wears Prada*, bringing good timing and a very nice voice to the character - **Metroland**

Among a large cast of comprimarios, the Pontio Pilato of tenor Joseph Gaines (a fusion of Shakespeare's Pompey and *The Provost*) stood out for his exemplary diction in the transposed dialogue with Luzio in Act 2 - **The Ithaca Journal**

Tenor Joseph Gaines was great fun as the pimp Pontio Pilato, "guilty of aiding and abetting the practice of free love" - **The Oneida Daily Dispatch**

**Indianapolis Opera, Die Zauberflöte**

Monostatos (Joseph Gaines) looked authentically Egyptian and svelte in a revealing mini-skirt and collar... Gaines sang Monostatos's music beautifully while cavorting about the stage - **Opera New**

**Glimmerglass Opera – Orpheus in the Underworld**

Joyce Castle (Public Opinion) and Jake Gardner (Jupiter) performed with skill

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For Singers

and comic nuance, sang well, and comported themselves like the seasoned pros that they are. They were matched by a wonderfully fey, wonderfully sung “Mercury” from tenor Joseph Gaines, who by the way, also gave a lovely Young Artist’s recital at week’s end accompanied by Timothy Hoekman - **Opera Today**

More good work came from ... tenor Joseph Gaines as Mercury, who reports that ‘hell, fire and damnation are not as unsavory’ as he was led to believe. Mercury's patter song was cut from the production, but operagoers can hear Gaines sing it in French (the production is sung in English) during the pre-performance lecture - **The Oneida Daily Dispatch**

## **Indianapolis Opera, Falstaff**

The sweet-voiced Bardolfo of Joseph Gaines could have been singing Fenton... The rapport and interplay between Condy, Gaines and Plourde was a particular delight - **Opera News**

## **Regina Opera, Madama Butterfly**

Joseph Gaines was a scene-stealing Goro, his fine robust and secure tenor and amusing deportment in his gold Japanese robe and black bowler that made him an intriguing character. Goro’s being the ‘victim’ of Cio-Cio-San’s wrath when he spread rumors that ‘Sorrow’ was not necessarily Pinkerton’s child, was very well done. Gaines had the audiences’ attention at all times. He is naturally stage-worthy - **The Italian Voice**

## **Central City Opera, The Coronation of Poppea**

Tenor Joseph Gaines makes the most of the minor role Liberto - **Denver Post**

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