

Philippe Castagner reviews

Lyric Opera Ireland, The Merry Widow

Tipperary-born soprano Emma Walsh was delightful and, when called upon, vulnerable in the title role, while her love-interest Danilo was played with great charm and energy by Canadian-American tenor Philippe Castagner.- **The Irish Times**

Carnegie Hall, Various, Die Schöne Müllerin

Mr. Castagner had the right idea. His sound at the start was light and tightly focused, and if it was clear that he was holding power in reserve, it was hard to say at first exactly how he would use it. But by the fourth song, "Am Feierabend" ("On a Restful Evening"), deliberate understatement had given way to passion and nuanced coloration, which shifted as the cycle unfolded.

In the final songs, where Schubert moves beyond despair, Mr. Castagner made his way back to the more restrained mode he had applied at the start. But by then the journey had worked its transformative magic: straightforward as Mr. Castagner's approach was here, it was no longer the tabula rasa it had seemed in "Das Wandern" ("Wandering"), the cycle's introductory song.
- **The New York Times**

There might have been one or two in the audience before the recital thinking about the Super Bowl taking place at the same time, but in the end, the only football association possible was to consider Castagner a victorious underdog Giant.
- **San Francisco Classical voice**

Sometimes a performer comes along who is so perfect in a particular work that it seems impossible they might be capable of

something else or that the work in hand could ever be done better. From now on, I will think of a young tenor named Philippe Castagner whenever I think of Franz Schubert's great song cycle "Die Schöne Müllerin" (clumsy translation: "The Fair Miller-Maid"). At Grace Episcopal Church on Tuesday afternoon, Mr. Castagner put his indelible stamp on that masterpiece. It came as close to perfection as I can imagine.

- **The Post and Courier**

The Metropolitan Opera, Wozzeck

bass Richard Bernstein and tenor Philippe Castagner particularly strong as the First Apprentice and Fool. - **New York Classical review**

Boston Symphony, Les Troyens

Also impeccable was Philippe Castagner as Hylas. - **The Berkshire Review For the Arts**

Philippe Castagner gave a beautiful, heart-rending delivery of Hylas's Song.- **Classical Source**

Tenor Philippe Castagner showed that, in the right hands, there is no such thing as a small role in opera. His few lines as Hylas, a young Trojan sailor longing for home, were exquisitely sung and he received a well deserved accolade from the audience at the end of the performance.- **Opera Today**

Equally fine was tenor Philippe Castagner as the Trojan soldier Hylas. He intoned his lovely Act IV song with expansive lyricism - **Edge Boston**

New York Philharmonic, My Fair Lady

Similar heights are scaled by angelic-voiced tenor Philippe Castagner as Eliza's luckless suitor Freddy in his gloriously romantic "On the Street Where You Live.". - **Variety**

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Philippe Castagner let loose a beautiful tenor voice, if perhaps a little too operatic for the context, as Freddy Eynsford-Hill, Eliza's hapless suitor – **CBS News**

Philippe Castagner as Freddy Eynsford-Hill sings "On the Street Where You Live" with refulgent tone. – **TheatreMania**

Other performers do similarly circuitous, if more effective work - Philippe Castagner sings robustly as Eliza's upper-crust paramour Freddy, even if he can't break through his inherently wooden outer shell – **Talkinbroadway**

Bard Music Festival, Genoveva

Philippe Castagner sings Golo with a *lieder* singer's clarity. – **Financial Times**

Johannes Mannov as Siegfried, Philippe Castagner as Golo, Joshua Winograde as Drago, Michaela Martens as Margaretha, and Ylva Kihlberg as Genoveva all gave their parts the vocal elegance and intelligent characterization they required. – **Berkshire Fine Arts**

The affectingly light-voiced French tenor Philippe Castagner was scarily sympathetic in the opera's most complex role—that of Golo, the treacherous best friend. There was a Genoveva that should not be allowed to disappear. – **New York Observer**

Of course, a faithful retainer with designs on his master's wife is a plum role, and tenor Philippe Castagner, while somewhat low-key in his characterization, was vocally very convincing. He makes his amorous pitch in Genoveva's bedchamber in act two, in a setting of puffy white duvets covering the stage. – **Metroland**

American Symphony Orchestra, Le Roi Malgré Lui

In the last-act duet, Ms. Petibon and Philippe Castagner, who for two acts had been the opera's comic foils, suddenly grew into grand, romantic figures. Both made the switch not improbable but enchanting. Mr. Castagner is one of the most promising tenors since the late Alfredo Kraus. The manner is fresh, appealing, and winning, the voice saucy, wide-ranging, flexible. At first it sounds too light for serious moments - but then he opens it up and his voice soars and crests beautifully.

It was moving to see a few operatic old-timers rush to the footlights (like people used to do more often) to cheer the young singer. They were on to something: with luck and the right opportunities, Mr. Castagner could be a major tenor of his generation. – **The New York Sun**

The cast was splendid, with the hardy baritone John Packard as Henri, the agile and spirited coloratura soprano Patricia Petibon as Minka, the plaintive tenor Philippe Castagner as Nangis, the robust baritone Andrew Schroeder as Fritelli, and the lustrous soprano Twyla Robinson as Alexina. – **The New York Times**

Vancouver Opera, The Magic Flute

As Tamino, tenor Philippe Castagner made a memorable Vancouver Opera debut with his fresh sound and excellent diction. – **The Vancouver Sun**

As Pamina, soprano Nathalie Paulin has a gleaming voice, but she and her Tamino (effortless tenor Philippe Castagner) lack charisma, especially in director Robert McQueen's colloquial spoken translations. – **The Georgia Straight**

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New York Philharmonic, L'enfant et les Sortilèges

Philippe Castagner was hilarious in roles as diverse as a teapot and the aforementioned tree frog, each benefiting from his beautiful tenor and feisty articulation. - **MusicWeb**

All of the singers were excellent, with each of them (apart from Mentzer as the child) playing multiple roles. Standouts among them were coloratura soprano Celena Shafer, whose vocal pyrotechnics brought the fire, nightingale and princess to life, and tenor Philippe Castagner, who gave delightful interpretations of the Wedgwood teapot's jazzy broken English, the old man's arithmetical patter, and the tree frog's fly-catching exclamations of "Ploc!". - **Classical Source**

L'enfant et les Sortilèges, Naxos Records

My favorites are Agathe Martel (the fairy-tale princess), Geneviève Després (Mother, the dragonfly, and the squirrel), and especially Philippe Castagner (the arithmetic man, the teapot, and the tree frog), all of whom have a wonderful sense of French style (all *Canadiens*). - **Classical Cd Review**

Pick of the cast is bass Kevin Short, a marvelously gruff Armchair and a fiercely unhappy Tree. Philippe Castagner is almost as fine in the tenor roles, especially as the pugnacious Wedgewood Teapot. - **Fanfare**

Canadian-American tenor Philippe Castagner also enlivens the action with his characterful, animated portrayals of the Little Old Man and the Tree Frog. - **Opera Canada**

Maybe I should not pick out any one further singer, for in truth there is not a weak link anywhere, but for me Philippe Castagner's Arithmetic Man is an absolute jewel. - **David's Review Corner**

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