



Douglas Boyd

Conductor

BEETHOVEN *Fidelio*, Garsington Opera, Philharmonia Orchestra

[...] conductor Douglas Boyd, Garsington's artistic director, seemed absolutely in his element, emphatically conveying the heights and depths of the score even in reduced form.

George Hall, Opera News, September 2020

Boyd uses a reduced orchestration for 13 instrumentalists from the Philharmonia, conducting with passion, style and a wonderful sense of dramatic momentum. The whole thing is haunting, beautiful and extraordinarily moving.

Tim Ashley, The Guardian, September 2020

Douglas Boyd conducted an ensemble of thirteen members of the Philharmonia Orchestra in a punchy, shapely reading that expanded in the resonant acoustic of Garsington's PVC-sided pavilion. [...] Altogether a heart-warming occasion.

Rupert Christiansen, The Telegraph, September 2020

Garsington's chamber version of *Fidelio* was more like the real thing. [...] Douglas Boyd conducted a pacy account of the score with single strings, solo flute, oboe, bassoon, trumpet, two horns and timpani. [...] Beethoven's immortal score performed with such life-affirming radiance.

Hugh Canning, The Sunday Times, September 2020

Interaction is limited to what is possible within the rules of social distancing. Yet the inescapable power of the piece comes through, due to Mumford's discrete direction, the vocal aptness of the principals and the measured and yet equally dynamic conducting of Garsington's artistic director, Douglas Boyd.

The Stage, September 2020

[...] revelatory chamber-music Beethoven. s[...] For those of us who find a large-scale parade ground finale typical of Beethoven hammering in one nail too many, this ending delivered something much more convincing – a personal emancipation, the rhythms kept crisp and elevated by Boyd.

David Nice, The Arts Desk, September 2020

UNMUTE: A Musical Reunion, Garsington Opera, Philharmonia Orchestra

Dougie Boyd got musical proceedings underway with characteristic immediacy and clarity, instantly transporting us into the heart of the unravelling knots of comic confusion [...]

Boyd sculpted the counterpoint and textures with pinpoint clarity, expertly shaping the intensifying emotions. [...] Boyd's flexible handling of tempo conveyed both self-reflection and insistent resolve.

Claire Seymour, Opera Today, July 2020

STRAVINSKY/VAUGHAN WILLIAMS/BERLIOZ, Virginia Symphony Orchestra

Boyd, whose podium style throughout the evening was stylishly energetic and involved, also drew from his resources the full spectrum of drama, passion, spirit and excitement contained in the Berlioz, which found the audience bounding to its collective feet in sustained and enthusiastic applause.

John Shulson, Virginia Gazette, January 2020

IAIN GRANDAGE (world premiere)/VAUGHAN WILLIAMS/ BEETHOVEN, West Australian Symphony Orchestra

Sinuous playing and gesture cut neatly through antiphonal string ensembles held in perfect balance by Douglas Boyd's deft baton. [...] Boyd blended three dozen string voices into one, micro-managing the ebb and flow; lush tones and refined dynamics the hallmark of the climax and cadence.

David Cusworth, The West Australian, October 2019

ELGAR Introduction and Allegro / BEETHOVEN Pastoral Symphony, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra

In music that was rugged and tender by turns, sometimes within the space of a bar, Boyd gave us bold striding lines and fierce tremolos exploding in cascading scales. [...] one was transfixed from Boyd's moulding of the very first phrase. There was shape and spring and, as the movement progressed, skilful foregrounding and backgrounding of divergent colours.

William Dart, The New Zealand Herald, October 2019

DVOŘÁK Symphony No.9 From the New World, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Boyd was a delight to watch in full flight, urging the players ever onward and upward but always maintaining a crisp line.

Diana Carroll, Arts Hub, October 2019

MOZART Don Giovanni, Garsington Opera

The Garsington Opera Orchestra was excellent, and Douglas Boyd made the overture and the ensembles crackle with energy.

Roger Parker, Opera Magazine, August 2019

In the pit, Douglas Boyd provided delightfully spry and urgent directing of the ever-excellent Garsington Opera Orchestra

Andrew Green, Opera Now, August 2019

...a taut account of the score delivered by the Garsington Opera Orchestra under Boyd's sure-footed direction.

George Hall, The Stage, May 2019

You could hardly ask for more verve in the ensembles, or more gentle support in the arias, and Douglas Boyd seems to have a genuine connection with each player.

Melanie Eskenazi, Music OMH, June 2019

In the pit Douglas Boyd, an expert Mozartian, offers a fleet-footed performance that emphasises, as many don't, Mozart's lightness of touch in what is surely his greatest opera.

David Mellor, Daily Mail, June 2019

Musically, the production is a huge and marvellously satisfying feast, with the Garsington Opera Orchestra in magnificent form (under the company's artistic director Douglas Boyd) from the opening bars of the famous overture. [...] This is Garsington at its mighty best.

Christopher Gray, Oxford Times, June 2019

SCHUBERT/MOZART, Philharmonia Orchestra

...the Philharmonia, playing at its best, responded to Boyd's perceptive interpretation in which the balancing of parts was exemplary. [...] Ideally judging the increase of pace, Boyd moved the music unrelentingly forward to thrilling effect.

Antony Hodgson, Classical Source, March 2019

Douglas Boyd set a lively pace from the outset, but it was the dynamic balance of his unfussy direction that lent the performance its cumulative strength and

continual, gripping momentum. He knew what he wanted to hear at every turn and we heard it too, from the dawn light of the opening horn call to the baritone night-songs of cellos and bassoons. [...] The Scherzo's Trio was infused with wine-soaked nostalgia, and the finale's endless dance stayed light on its feet to the end thanks to the stamina of the strings and the accents and attacks cultivated by Boyd, who as principal oboe of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe played the symphony often enough under Claudio Abbado to communicate for himself its elemental vitality.

Peter Quantrill, The Arts Desk, March 2019

Boyd's performance was breathlessly exciting, and totally thrilling in its effects: strings always had bite and threw themselves fearlessly, totally cohesive, at their leaping arpeggios, emboldened by burnished brass (here I welcome the heft and depth of modern trombones and trumpets in this repertoire, as well as distinctly uncool doubled woodwinds).

Benjamin Poore, Bachtrack, March 2019

STRAUSS Capriccio, Garsington Opera

The Garsington Opera Orchestra gave a scintillating account of the score under Douglas Boyd's sympathetic, affectionate direction. Boyd clearly loves this music with a passion, and it shows in every bar. Outstanding.

Melanie Eskenazi, MusicOMH, June 2018 (5)*

Under Douglas Boyd's direction the musical edifice was splendidly sustained, repeatedly spinning golden harmony out of Strauss's moments of ingeniously controlled chaos.

Michael Church, The Independent, June 2018

Douglas Boyd conducts a sumptuous account of the music – some of it so lovely, so fragrant, so delicately wrought.

Rupert Christiansen, The Telegraph, June 2018

Douglas Boyd conducts with affection, bringing to life this detailed score with a deftness of touch.

Louise Lewis, British Theatre Guide, June 2018

It sounds wonderful, too, with the Garsington Opera Orchestra excelling itself under the company's artistic director, Douglas Boyd, who allows Strauss' long lines to flow as he elucidates the complexity of the composer's super-enriched harmonies and gorgeous orchestral writing.

George Hall, The Stage, June 2018

Douglas Boyd conducts this translucent, ornate score with dedication and affection

Claudia Pritchard, Culture Whisper, June 2018 (5)*

The conversational ease was complemented and enhanced by Boyd, who captured the transparency of the densely motivic score, allowing both the words to be heard without undue effort and the multitude of instrumental motifs to make their mark lightly but lucidly. At moments where Strauss's own voice in the debate seems to slip to the fore, the music seamlessly blossomed with sumptuously impassioned emotion, but elsewhere the gracious dance forms of the eighteenth-century which seem to underpin the musical discourse carried the drama forward charmingly.

Claire Seymour, Opera Today, June 2018

This Capriccio, splendidly conducted by Dougie Boyd, really is a must-see.

David Mellor, Daily Mail, June 2018

Boyd drew ripe, voluptuous yet delicate playing from the large orchestra in a score fraught with complexity which yet must sound silken and sheer.
Fiona Maddocks, The Guardian, June 2018

MENDELSSOHN/SCHUMANN Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

Douglas Boyd brought a highly individual approach in Mendelssohn's *The Hebrides (Fingal's Cave)* Op. 26 with very precise rhythmic profiling in the strings allied to internal clarity of winds and brass. [...] conductor Boyd and his players achieved a spirited performance of the original 1841 version of Schumann's Symphony No. 4, integrating the four continuous movements with marvellous clarity and impetus, the scherzo taken at a hair-raising fast tempo!
Peter Donnelly, The Mercury, 19 Oct 2017

MENDELSSOHN/BEETHOVEN Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra

Douglas Boyd's spacious conception of Mendelssohn's Hebrides overture impressed with meticulous articulation before lifting tempo and dynamics to replace gentle waves with surging swell. [...] With unflagging energy and fire, Boyd and his musicians caught every surprise and musical U-turn, while doing full justice to the work's rich and prescient Adagio.
New Zealand Herald, 2 Oct 2017

MOZART Le nozze di Figaro, Garsington Opera

Douglas Boyd shows off the prowess of the fine Garsington Opera Orchestra by exploring lowest levels of pianissimo and daring the singers to match
Inge Kjemtrup, The Stage, 5 June 2017, (5)*

Douglas Boyd led the orchestra, chorus and soloists in a similarly old-school manner, recalling the style of the great Viennese Mozartians, and, as one might expect of this former oboist, giving the woodwinds every opportunity to shine, as Mozart does. [...] Bravo Cox, bravo Boyd, bravi tutti.
Hugh Canning, Opera Magazine, August 2017

Dougie Boyd conducted with vivacious alertness, drawing a full range of emotions from his band.
Claire Seymour, Opera Today, 3 June 2017

...conducted elegantly by Garsington Opera's artistic director, Douglas Boyd
Paul Levy, Arts Journal, 5 June, 2017

Douglas Boyd's sparky orchestra
Rebecca Franks, The Times, 8 June 2017

Garsington's music director, Dougie Boyd, leads an engagingly alert performance.
The Mail on Sunday, 11 June 2017

Douglas Boyd conducted a wonderfully vibrant, elegant, sparkling account of the score (5*)
Melanie Eskenaz, Music OMH, 5 June 2017

Douglas Boyd's reading of the score works hand-in-glove with Cox's approach, emphasising the rococo elegance and timeless charm of the music rather than the bubbling, even subversive energy that's played up by the likes of Teodor Currentzis.

Katherine Cooper, BachTrack 8 June 2017

John Cox and Douglas Boyd clearly enjoy working together and it shows in a variety of subtle ways. This is no ordinary Figaro – there is a tangible sense of affection in every bar. [...] Above all [they] have the inestimable gift of pacing the action so that it flows effortlessly forward. [...] Douglas Boyd conducts with authority and passion.

Douglas Cooksey Classical Source 4 June 2017 (5)*

As always, the Garsington Opera Orchestra performed immaculately under Douglas Boyd's secure baton.

Trevor Howell, Henley Standard, 1 July 2017

Artistic Director Douglas Boyd conducts Garsington Opera Orchestra with pace.

Clare Colvin, Sunday Express 11 June 2017

MOZART Le nozze di Figaro, L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, Soloists/Chorus of Garsington Opera

La réussite de la soirée doit énormément à la direction de Douglas Boyd. Son Mozart est vif et pétulant, en un mot : théâtral. Mais le chef écossais sait aussi aller chercher dans la partition des détails d'orchestration inhabituels, nous donnant alors l'impression de redécouvrir l'ouvrage. Boyd nous propose ainsi un tapis sonore quelque fois inédit mais toujours authentiquement mozartien.

The success of the evening owes a great deal to Douglas Boyd's musical direction. His Mozart is lively and petulant, in a word: theatrical. But the Scottish conductor also knows how to bring out unusual orchestration details in the score, giving us the impression of rediscovering the work. Boyd thus offers us a sound carpet sometimes unpublished but still authentically Mozartian.

Jean Michel Pennetier, Forum Opera.com 23 June 2017

Douglas Boyd entame l'ouverture de manière violente, presque à la manière de "Don Giovanni", on sent, en cette année 1786, y gronder déjà la Révolution, et l'on redécouvrira, à l'aune de cette nervosité de l'orchestre, combien Lorenzo da Ponte, le librettiste de Mozart, ne cherche nullement à adoucir la pièce de Beaumarchais. Boyd accentue les attaques, les notes de passage, bouscule les accords. [...] Par la suite on n'aura que des compliments à faire au chef, qui finira sur les rotules, après avoir constamment joué l'ardeur, la dynamique, imposant à l'orchestre

Culture Box 10 July 2017

Le Théâtre des Champs-Élysées réunit les « deux amours » de Douglas Boyd, l'Orchestre de chambre de Paris dont il est le chef musical et le Garsington Opera dont il est chef artistique, dans une interprétation des Noces de Figaro de Mozart. [...] La direction musicale de Douglas Boyd, menée vivement, est suffisamment précise et claire pour que les chanteurs, placés à l'avant de la scène, puissent s'exprimer et jouer sans craindre de décalage.

Frédérique Epin, Olyxix, 30 June 2017

Le chef Douglas Boyd propose un concert pas comme les autres en invitant la distribution de la production récente des Noces au Festival Garsington Opera, avec une conception scénique sur le plateau d'après ladite production. L'ouverture de l'œuvre est légère et étrangement... anglaise? [...] Ainsi, au niveau instrumental, nous trouvons un Orchestre de Chambre de Paris en bonne forme en termes générales [...] Les bois, au contraire, ont brillé d'une candeur toute mozartienne, viennoise, avec une limpidité fantastique dans l'exécution tout à fait française, au cours des quatre actes. Les cordes de l'ensemble paraissent caractérielles, dansant toujours autour de l'espièglerie et de la nonchalance, sans omettre de la profondeur et de la tendresse.

Classique News.com 3 July 2017

BEETHOVEN Fidelio, L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, Soloists/Chorus of Garsington Opera

Douglas Boyd maîtrise quant à lui son sujet: tempo allant, attaques nettes il trouve [...], le juste pouls du drame, grâce un orchestre allégé qu'il fait sonner comme s'il s'agissait d'instruments anciens (splendide quatuor du 1). Son geste souple et élégant porte le chef-d'œuvre sans jamais laisser retomber la tension, ni contrarier les équilibres d'une écriture foisonnante et inventive, jusque dans la flamboyance des Chœurs, tenus ici rigoureusement par le Choeur Accentus.

François Lessieur, Le Wanderer, 24 November 2016

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto in G Major No.4, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Boyd and the MSO strings made a fierce creature of the slow movement's opening, establishing a gripping contrast with Lewis' limpid restraint. This reading impressed for its care with detail and an emotional rigour, which stretched to the soloist's encore of a late Brahms intermezzo. [...] Boyd and his ensemble gave a powerful airing to this luxuriant soundscape.

Clive O'Connell, The Sydney Morning Herald, 16 September 2016

TCHAIKOVSKY Eugene Onegin, Garsington Opera

With its large orchestra and very large chorus, Eugene Onegin is Garsington Opera's most ambitious production in its twenty-eight seasons. Conducted by the company's artistic director, Douglas Boyd, and directed by Michael Boyd (no relation), artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company from 2002-2012[...] this is Garsington Opera's biggest adventure yet. It's a triumph.

Paul Levy, Arts Journal, 5 June 2016

But it is the Garsington orchestra and chorus under Douglas Boyd that keeps the voltage at a consistent high.

Hannah Nepil, Financial times, 8 June 2016

The result, though theatrically flawed in places, is shattering..... With superb conducting and committed orchestral playing, Tchaikovsky is well served.

Mark Valencia, WhatsOnStage, 7 June 2016

Douglas Boyd's urgent, well-shaped conducting perfectly complemented the unfolding drama...

Barry Millington, London Evening Standard, 6 June 2016

I have never been more moved by the opening pages [...]The musical and visual juxtaposition is simply heartbreaking. [...] Douglas Boyd whisks the orchestra inexorably to the drama's tumultuous end.

*Claudia Pritchard, Culture Whisper [****], 6 June 2016*

In the pit Douglas Boyd maintained an urgent pace with the score and securing some fine playing from the Garsington Opera Orchestra, whether in the detail of more intimate moments (particularly from solo instrumentalists in the Letter scene, or Lensky's aria, for example) or in the overall effect of more extrovert sequences such as the waltz or polonaise. Often he drew a symphonic sweep across scenes with shimmering strings leading to notable climaxes in the music to stress the dramatic action.

Curtis Rogers, Seen and Heard, 7 June 2016

Wherever you see it, this is a show of consistent quality, both musical and dramatic.... musical representation is so expertly conveyed by Douglas Boyd, the increasingly impressive Garsington Opera Orchestra and its fine young chorus.

George Hall, The Stage, 6 June 2016

Douglas Boyd once again obtained wonderful playing from the Garsington orchestra, the 'cellos and bassoons in particular producing the most glorious sounds...

Music OMH, 6 June 2016

One pleasure is the Garsington Opera Orchestra [...] Douglas Boyd makes a virtue of leanness by conducting an admirably taut account of this marvellous score, in which the wind principals disclose almost as much about the characters' feelings as the characters themselves.

Richard Morrison, The Times, 6 June 2016

The music's cohesion was assured in Douglas Boyd's conducting. Garsington's artistic director has an orchestra-insider's natural command of how the score moves from chamber rapport to symphonic sweep, and the sound he drew from his players was unobtrusively clear with some superbly expressive wind-playing.

Peter Reed, Classical Source, 5 June 2016

The orchestra under Douglas Boyd made gave a wonderfully lyrical account of the score. Lithe and passionate, the performance was beautifully fluid but focussed and controlled, so that under Douglas Boyd's disciplined hands the passion was there but the orchestra never came anywhere near overwhelming the singers. This was a superb season opener, and a demonstration of how Garsington Opera has moved on from being an outstanding specialist in a couple of composers, into a house where immensely thoughtful highly crafted work is being done in all areas.

Robert Hugill, Planet Hugill & Opera Today, 4 June 2016

SIBELIUS violin Concerto | SCHUBERT Symphonies, L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris

L'Inachevée de Douglas Boyd sera pour beaucoup une découverte. Autant dire que cette lecture, tendre et aérée, presque Mozartienne, allège des textures séculièrement chargées. [...]Boyd va chercher la matière sonore à mains nues, hors de son estrade, pour l'envoyer en ricochant dans les airs. Magnifique deuxième thème : l'accompagnement de notes répétées s'accommode fantastiquement des phrasés évanescents que lui insuffle le pupitre de bois. Art du concret, Boyd traverse l'Andante con moto avec l'éloquence de la simplicité, dans une absence d'effets décoratifs et de crispations.

Julien Hanck, Bachtrack, 21 April 2016

MOZART Cosi fan Tutte, Garsington Opera

Boyd conducts with considerable insight into Mozart's style and content, and the Garsington Opera Orchestra is consistently keen and alert.

George Hall, The Stage, 9 June 2015

Boyd coaxes and caresses an evening of ravishing playing from the Garsington Opera Orchestra.

Mark Valencia, WhatsOnStage, 9 June 2015

BERLIOZ Roman Carnival | RAVEL Piano Concerto | SIBELIUS Symphony No. 2, Toronto Symphony Orchestra

...Boyd teased out orchestral colours in all of their brilliance, He, too, has a lyrical way with a score, setting aside his long baton in the second movement to use a choral conductor's gestures to get the right sensuous shapes out of each musical line.[...] The orchestra was with Boyd the whole way[...]Boyd brought an amplex and warmth to the music that amplified its emotions in all directions, making for a very moving performance.

John Terauds, Toronto Star, 17 October 2012

MOZART Don Giovanni, Garsington Opera

Mozart's score is given a bracing outing by Douglas Boyd and the Garsington Orchestra.

The Arts Desk, 8 June 2012

...the conductor Douglas Boyd keeps things fizzing

The Independent, 4 June 2012

Douglas Boyd's conducting provides solid propulsion.

The Guardian, 4 June 2012

...admirable conductor Douglas Boyd...kept the orchestral playing razor-sharp.

The Times, 4 June 2012

This is as stimulating and refreshing a Don Giovanni as I have seen anywhere in the last decade, sung and played to a level that sets a new benchmark at this address.

The Sunday Times, 5 June 2012

But the Garsington Opera orchestra's playing, under Douglas Boyd, is the biggest draw. Boyd coaxes exquisite balance from his players, and is passionately attuned to both the music's turbulence and intimacy.

The Stage, 4 June 2012

The Garsington Opera orchestra conducted by Douglas Boyd is just splendid, delivering Mozart's wonderful tunes brilliantly and the whole evening is very special indeed.

Curtain Up, 4 June 2012

BEETHOVEN Symphony Cycle, Melbourne, August 2011:

Boyd understands the range and scope of interpretation that these works afford, and demand. In the first concert consisting of the First and Third Symphonies, Boyd showed a commitment to producing a balanced sound with clear expression of the long, lyrical lines.

The Age, 9 August 2011

The opening Adagio to the Fourth Symphony was delivered with great poise and control, with Boyd conjuring a haunting sense of expectation while eschewing any sense of grandiose portentousness.

The Arts Desk, 15 June 2011

...under guest conductor Douglas Boyd, the orchestra is sounding well-balanced and fine-timbred.

The Herald Sun, 17 June 2011

With the larger Seventh Symphony, the MSO made an excellent contribution to this series, with Boyd welding the four movements into an impressive unit.

The Age, 19 August 2011

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The Age, 19 August, 2011

MOZART The Marriage of Figaro, Garsington Opera

There is nothing overly fancy...in Douglas Boyd's taut conducting.

The Times, 4 June 2010

To round things off, Douglas Boyd extracts beguiling balances and stark colouring from the Garsington Opera orchestra.

The Stage, 4 June 2010

Douglas Boyd...brought a player's sensibility to instrumental detail and chose unrushed, sympathetic tempi in an interpretation that will deepen.

The Observer, 6 June 2010

John Cox's Figaro...is notable for Douglas Boyd's instinctively Mozartian conducting...

The Sunday Times, 13 June 2010

In the pit, Douglas Boyd proved to be a natural Mozartian. His tempi were broadly on the fast side, but with no loss of detail, and the playing he got from the Garsington Orchestra was accomplished throughout. Boyd also proved to have a natural rapport with his singers, and there were no signs of awkwardness between pit and stage, as there often can be: ensembles went with a swing, solo numbers and duets were nicely judged, sforzandi and dynamic contrasts abounded – delightful.

Musical Criticism, 16 June 2010

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 5, Toronto Symphony Orchestra

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra was in fantastic form at Roy Thomson Hall on Wednesday night under visiting Scottish conductor Douglas Boyd.Under Douglas Boyd Beethoven Symphony No. 5 sounded as fresh as if the ink were barely dry on the page.

Toronto Star, February 11 2010

BEETHOVEN Fidelio, Garsington Opera

And the music certainly does sound sublime under Douglas Boyd's direction...his grasp of the Beethovenian idiom, pungent underlining of orchestral detail, empathy with his insgers' phrasing, and bold speeds, all this sounded more like a masterclass than the work of a conductor who made his opera debut only last year."

The Times, 5 June 2009

Douglas Boyd conducted with a fine sense of Beethovenian vigour, drawing wild and pungent playing from the orchestra.

The Daily Telegraph, 10 June 2009

