



## Garry Walker

### Conductor

#### **MARTINU The Greek Passion, Opera North**

Garry Walker conducts with a dark intensity that brings out both the score's violence and its extraordinary moments of ecstatic lyricism.

*Tim Ashley, The Guardian, September 2019*

Walker, in his first production since being named Opera North's music director designate, holds the potentially stark and sprawling score together tautly, bringing out Martinu's trademark radiance.

*John Allison, The Telegraph, September 2019*

The orchestra, under the music director designate Garry Walker, play with a suppleness and generosity that makes the score soar.

*Rebecca Franks, The Times, September 2019*

Martinu's luminous, eclectic score is handsomely conducted by new Music Director Garry Walker

*Graham Rickson, The Arts Desk, September 2019*

With the excellent Chorus and Orchestra of Opera North on superb form under the company's principal conductor-designate, Garry Walker, a Scottish musician whose Billy Budd in Leeds a year or two back confirmed him as a talent for years to come, this Greek Passion transcended the obstacles of text and staging to provide a vivid, intense musical experience.

*Mark Valencia, Musical America, September 2019*

This is another excellent performance under the baton of Garry Walker

*Dawn Smallwood, The Reviews Hub, September 2019*

#### **SAWER The Skating Rink, Garsington Opera**

Garry Walker and the Garsington Opera Orchestra deliver it all with panache

*Mark Valencia, WhatsOnStage, July 2018*

Conductor Garry Walker and the Garsington Opera Orchestra kept everything coherent, purposeful and slick

*(5\*) Charlotte Valori, Bachtrack, July 2018*

Praise to for the wonderfully vital and responsive Garsington Opera Orchestra under Garry Walker; translucent textures, rhythmic brio – especially in the jaunty dance sections. There is also great intensity when needed.

*(5\*) Alexander Campbell, Classical Source, July 2018*

[...]conducted deftly by Garry Walker and making the keenest impact in a surprisingly vivid acoustic

*Paul Driver, The Sunday Times, July 2018*

Conducted by Garry Walker, the score is executed with aplomb

*Louise Lewis, British Theatre Guide, July 2018*

Garry Walker's conducting is first rate

*Andrew Clements, The Guardian, July 2018*

Sawer's intriguing score, excellently conducted by Garry Walker  
*Sam Smith, MusicOMH, July 2018*

The score is vividly and virtuosically played under Garry Walker's impeccable direction.

*Richard Morrison, The Times, July 2018*

As conducted by Garry Walker, Sawer's score is a beguiling patchwork of colours and effects

*Michael Church, Independent, July 2018*

Under Garry Walker's expert guidance the orchestra drew a wide range of colours and textures from Sawer's score, giving as thrilling and committed performance as the singers on stage and making the piece really count.

*Robert Hugill, Planet Hugill, July 2018*

Garry Walker conducts the orchestra with panache

*Rupert Christiansen, The Telegraph, July 2018*

Garry Walker conducts the Garsington Opera Orchestra in a taut and cohesive performance.

*George Hall, The Stage, July 2018*

As the story builds, so does the soundworld, from the chilly sparseness of strings alone to the full force of the Garsington Opera Orchestra [...] and conducted with pace and precision by Garry Walker

*(5\*) Claudia Pritchard, CultureWhisper, July 2018*

#### **BRITTEN Billy Budd, Opera North at Aldeburgh Festival**

His reading of Britten's score has matured since last year's opening night, to the extent that I count this one of the most muscular accounts of it that I've heard. Walker's workout had the gruelling energy of sinews stretching and bones pumping as the Opera North Orchestra supplied a tireless display of physicality. [...] the orchestra openly revelled in Garry Walker's conducting.

*(5\*) Mark Valencia, Bachtrack, 25 June 2017*

#### **BRITTEN Billy Budd, Opera North**

"...Opera North's equally superb orchestra, which delivered a brilliantly vivid, sharply etched account under conductor Garry Walker, full of surging drama and also moments of exquisite contemplation."

*David Kettle, The Scotsman, 5 December 2016*

"The orchestra, conducted by Garry Walker, could hardly have been more alert"

*Martin Dreyer, Opera Magazine, December 2016*

"Garry Walker conducts with finesse, and the Opera North orchestra sustains tension with aplomb."

*Kate Kellaway, The Observer, 23 October 2016*

“Garry Walker’s conducting [...] encourages some eloquent orchestral playing.”  
*Rupert Christiansen, The Telegraph 19 October 2016*

“Garry Walker’s razor-sharp Opera North players let rip, too. Goosebumps all round [...] The final word goes to Vere, whose musical liberation if not the words that go with it makes complete sense in Walker’s postponement of the biggest climax to the last well-timed shattering chord.”  
*David Nice, The Arts Desk, 19 October 2016*

“conductor Garry Walker has the measure of the smallest details as well as the overall scope of the score.”  
*George Hall, The Stage, 19 October 2016*

“The beautifully emotional singing is faultless and is complemented by Garry Walker’s wonderful conducting style”  
*Sue Collier, The Reviews Hub, 18 October 2016*

“Britten’s ominous orchestration [...] was handled with great skill by conductor Gary Walker (winner of the 1999 Leeds Conductors’ Competition) who was making his Opera North debut.”  
*Richard Wilcocks, Bachtrack, 19 October 2016*

#### **VARESE Déserts, Red Note Ensemble, Lammermuir Festival**

“Garry Walker’s conducting might have been cool and precise, but he delivered a red-hot account of Varèse’s Déserts [...] one of the festival’s most unconventional and unforgettable evenings.”  
*(5\*) David Kettle, The Scotsman, 17 September 2016*

#### **BERIO, BARTOK, BRAHMS Symphony No. 2, Teatro dell’Opera di Roma**

In ogni caso ci pensa il direttore d’orchestra scozzese Garry Walker a conferire una omogeneità di clima sonoro all’intera serata. Bravo e didattico. Stacca tempi sempre molto comodi e rende chiaro, trasparente, il disegno dei testi. [...] Risponde bene l’Orchestra, la sua crescita è evidente.

In any case it is thanks to the Scottish conductor Garry Walker that the entire evening had a consistent high-sounding spirit. Both excellent and informative. Tempi are always taken with ease and he makes the outline of the score both clear and transparent [...] The Orchestra is responsive and its growth is noticeable.  
*Mario Gamba, Alfabet2, 25 May 2016*

#### **(Premieres): CRANE Chamber Symphony No.2 | JIMENEZ XL111 – Memoriam Vivire, London Sinfonietta**

Walker ensured scrupulous and dedicated playing. The descent into silence at the end was meticulously observed and added an eerie, almost otherworldly, quality which seemed entirely appropriate.

*Brian Barford, Classical Source, 10 October 2015*

**MUSSORGSKY/RAVEL Pictures at an Exhibition, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra**

There is a lightness of touch to Walker's conducting that can be heard in each moment of the music.

*Diana Carroll, The Adelaide Independent News, 25 March 2015*

**ADAMS Short Ride in a Fast Machine, Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra**

Conductor Garry Walker was a fearless driver for a four-minute zoom through John Adams' Short Ride in a Fast Machine...it was a brilliant workout, as colours shimmered and shifted around Eric Renick's deadpan, metronomic woodblock.

*New Zealand Herald, February 2015*

**HARRIS Symphony No. 4, Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra**

Garry Walker and Brett Dean secure exemplary results from the Auckland orchestra [...] most truthful sound and useful presentation, too. An enterprising pairing that can be welcomed with open arms.

*Gramophone Magazine, Oct 2014*

**JANACEK The Cunning Little Vixen, Garsington Opera**

Presiding musically over the show is conductor Garry Walker, who shows a profound understanding of the colours and textures of Janacek's idiosyncratic writing, and draws exceptional playing from the Garsington Opera orchestra.

*George Hall, The Stage, June 2014*

The playing under Garry Walker's expert thrust is mostly first-rate...with woodwind nature-noises clearer than I've ever heard them.

*David Nice, The Arts Desk, June 2014*

...the conductor, Garry Walker, kept the performance on its toes.

*Richard Fairman, The Financial Times, June 2014*

Garry Walker's handling of the music is sharp-eared, to say the least, and he and his superb house orchestra remain totally alive to the score's nervous, tumbling surface throughout as well as to the darker currents bubbling underneath.

*Guy Dammann, The Guardian, June 2014*

**DILLON New York Triptych (premiere) | FENNESSY Hauptstimme (premiere), Red Note Ensemble**

Garry Walker conducted with cool authority and the ensemble played with deceptive ease, making relaxed work of very difficult music.

*Herald Scotland, 19 November 2014*

**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Scheherazade, The Pacific Symphony**



The highlight of the concert for this listener (and one of the highlights of the season, actually) was Walker's performance of "Scheherazade." The Scottish conductor, permanent guest conductor of the Royal Philharmonic and principal guest conductor of the Royal Scottish Orchestra obviously has a thing for it. His affection came through in almost every bar.

*Drew A. Kelley, Orange County Register, August 2013*

**BRUCH, MALAGINI, ELGAR, BBC Philharmonic**

Walker's transition to the heartbreaking theme of the wonderfully lyrical Adagio was impressive, creating intensely passionate music that combined with the scent and sounds of nature. On splendid form under Garry Walker the BBC Philharmonic strings improve each time I hear them, especially the silver-toned high strings.

*Michael Cookson, Seen and Heard, 17 January 2012*