
Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

Mozart: Idomeneo

Dutch National Opera, February 2025

British conductor Laurence Cummings and the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra do justice to both the expressive sophistication and propulsive ferocity of Mozart's first great opera.

Britse dirigent Laurence Cummings en het Nederlands Kamerorkest doen recht aan zowel de expressieve verfijning als de voortstuwende felheid van Mozarts eerste grote opera.

- Jenny Camilleri, do Volkskrant

The Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Laurence Cummings, is on strong form.

Het Nederlands Kamerorkest onder leiding van Laurence Cummings is sterk op dreef. - **Jos Schuring, Scènes**

Laurence Cummings serves the vocals through his understated orchestral direction. He lets the singers interpret their score with verve, and also act accordingly.

Toch heb ik muzikaal wel genoten van deze 'Idomeneo'. Laurence Cummings dient de zang door zijn ingetogen orkestleiding. Hij laat de zangers zo vaaZe interpreteren hun partituur niet alleen met verve, maar acteren ook navenant. -

- Pieter T'Jonck, Pzazz

The Netherlands Chamber Orchestra conducted by Brit Laurence Cummings sounds very neat

Het Nederlands Kamerorkest onder leiding van de Brit Laurence Cummings klinkt erg keurig. - **Hugo Jager, Trouw**

Handel: Giulio Cesare

Glyndebourne, June 2024

with a first-class cast, the Handelian Laurence Cummings conducting a work he knows inside out, and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment excelling in the pit.

- Fiona Maddocks, The Guardian

The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment played with joy and exemplary balance under the baton of that Handelian par excellence Laurence Cummings.

- Mark Valencia, Opera Magazine

A whole chapter could be written on the collaborative glories from the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under the vintage guidance of Laurence Cummings. Every introduction and rounding-off teem with personality; singing, perfectly phrasing violins are underpinned by a thunderous bass line where needed. This, too, is where proper rehearsal time pays off in the dialogues of instruments and voices.

- David Nice, The Arts Desk

It was significant that on the first night the most ecstatic cheer was not for a singer but for the conductor Laurence Cummings, the undisputed king of Baroque opera, who steered a perfectly assured path through Handel's ravishing musical landscape.

- Michael Church, iNews

Thankfully, there was not a single weak link in Glyndebourne's crack cast – all new to this production – who, under Laurence Cummings' vivid direction, attacked their roles brilliantly, including plenty of da capo ornamentation.

- Mark Pullinger, OperaNow

Aci by the River

London Handel Festival, April 2024

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Throughout, Laurence Cummings's musical direction provides the necessary élan to excavate the exquisite as well as the terrible from this troubling tale of single-minded desire.

- Rachel Halliburton, *The Times*

Still, this detracts little from the vigorous playing of the London Handel Orchestra, conducted from the harpsichord by Laurence Cummings. This is Cummings's 25th and final season as the LHF's musical director, and he's going out on a high.

- Erica Jeal, *The Guardian*

Laurence Cummings, as ever, drew a sumptuous palette of Handelian colours from the players.

- Boyd Tonkin, *The Arts Desk*

Meanwhile, under the inspiring direction of Laurence Cummings, the London Handel Orchestra demonstrates what a fabulous work this seldom-performed piece is.

- Michael Church, *iNews*

Monteverdi's L'Incoronazione di Poppea Theater Basel, March 2024

Finally, let us highlight the excellent work accomplished by the instrumentalists of La Cetra, placed under the scrupulous direction of Laurence Cummings (who twice makes his beautiful tenor voice heard in subtle replies).

Bach Brandenburg Concertos Academy of Ancient Music, January 2024

Its high point rightly came when Laurence Cummings, directing the whole show from the harpsichord, delivered the famous first-movement cadenza not as the feverish clatter of prestissimo passagework one usually hears but as one imagines Bach himself might have done — with pauses for emphasis and subtle variations in speed.

– Richard Morrison, *The Times*

Alexander's Feast London Handel Festival, February 2023

Laurence Cummings [is] a conductor steeped in Handelian style, and the ornamentation, particularly by the fiddles and oboes of the London Handel Orchestra, was profuse and precise. But he is also alive to the spirit of the music and isn't afraid to deploy big dynamics to bring it to life. The passages when the excellent London Handel Chorus let rip must have made strong lampposts quiver well north of Oxford Circus.

- Richard Morrison, *The Times*

Haydn The Seasons Academy of Ancient Music, Barbican, October 2022

A slow-burn, glorious performance by the Academy of Ancient Music, conducted by Laurence Cummings.

Robert Thickeness, *Opera Now*

The Crown – Heroic Arias for Senesino [CD]

Continuo realisations are plush, with director Laurence Cummings spinning ravishing melodies from his figured bass

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Berta Joncus, *Classical Music Magazine*

Monteverdi's L'Orfeo Garsington Opera, Summer 2022

Cummings opts for a beguilingly lush wash of continuo from five different musicians, and splits his instrumental forces effectively on either side of the stage, but his main achievement is ensuring his singers constantly invest their lines with emotional significance as well as stylish ornamentation. It's all bewitching [...].

Richard Morrison, *The Times*, 5*

The true vocal pillars of this piece are, inescapably, the tenor Ed Lyon in the title role, and the ever active chorus, with its multiple brief solos, including at one point from the conductor Laurence Cummings. [...] Cummings, directing from the harpsichord, and his English Concert musicians, played on stage throughout, sporting similar white and cream clothes to the dancers, and joining the staging at times.

Martin Kettle, *The Guardian*, 5*

[The staging] allows for the musical freedom Cummings draws without actually conducting [...] With Cummings stepping away from the harpsichord to sing Apollo's intervention and joining the Monteverdi madrigal sung as an encore, this is an evening of true ensemble work.

John Allison, *The Telegraph*, 4*

The dynamic and barefoot English Concert is on stage, its players in the heart of the action. Laurence Cummings directing this pulsating score from the keyboard even sings as Orfeo's father in the closing moments.

Claudia Pritchard, *Culture Whisper*, 5*

Handel's La Resurrezione St-Martin-in-the-Fields, April 2022

Cummings proved an exacting judge of the sometimes tricky balance between drama and reflection, teasing out instrumental detail as he went – the woodwind that alternately grieve and console, the warmth in the strings, the gleam in the brass that eventually heralds the triumph of light over darkness.

Tim Ashley, *The Guardian* ****

Laurence Cummings had rustled up eight violins rather than Handel's 20, but this still sounded meaty and wonderful in the airy acoustic of St Martin in the Fields... The first half has unstoppable energy thanks to Cummings, bouncing with excitement as he urged his musicians on.

Robert Thicknesse, *Opera Now* 5*

Alcina Opera North, Spring 2022

Laurence Cummings encourages really stylish, sensuous musicianship from the Opera North orchestra (he's also on cracking harpsichord duty)

Neil Fisher, *The Times*

Laurence Cummings choosing perfect tempos and dynamic contrasts. The score is Handel at his most melodious and subtle, with many passages for small groups of instruments or even solo instruments, and under Cummings the small orchestra plays beautifully

Ron Simpson, *The Reviews Hub*

Cummings draws colourful, energised playing from a pared-down orchestra

Graham Rickson, *The Arts Desk*

Laurence Cummings was stylish in is conducting from the harpsichord

Opera Magazine

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Haydn's Creation

Academy of Ancient Music, September 2021

Delectable timbres and colours didn't stop leaping from Cummings's expert band, who played with such vigour

Geoff Brown, *The Times*

Cummings kept his tempi lively (as did Haydn, it appears) and drew some thrillingly tight and fierce choruses from the choir behind. This *Creation* glinted and shone in a bracingly clear light.

Boyd Tonkin, *theartsdesk*

Ariodante

Göttingen Handel Festival, September 2021

Laurence Cummings finishes his tenure as artistic director of the International Handel Festival Göttingen this season, rounding off ten years in the post. He will undoubtedly be missed, not least for his performances as music director with the FestspielOrchester Göttingen. He was at the harpsichord for this concert of "Ariodante" and elicited a superb performance from the orchestra, which captured the elegance and vitality of Handel's score. There was clarity and sharpness about their playing which could not fail to please. He also maintained a wonderful balance, on all levels, not least between the orchestra and the NDR Vokalensemble, which he nicely integrated into the musical fabric.

Alan Neilson, *Opera Wire*

Rodelinda

Göttingen Handel Festival, September 2021

With the Festival Orchestra, Laurence Cummings proves that Handel's music is in the best of hands here. The different moods are worked out with absolute precision, also with tempo variations, and make it possible to understand why this work was so celebrated by the audience at the premiere.

Thomas Molke, *Online Musik Magazin*

the extraordinary interpretation by Cummings that dissects the score, enhancing every nuance of color: the palette of feelings transformed into music

Franco Soda, *Giornale della musica*

CD Review: Cummings, a seasoned and sensitive Handelian, directs his first-rate period band with a vivid sense of colour, character and dramatic situation

Richard Wigmore, *Gramophone*

Handel's Messiah

English National Opera/BBC Broadcast, April 2021

Laurence Cummings is an experienced Handel conductor, and ENO's orchestra played neatly and stylishly

Tristram Kenton, *The Times*

Belshazzar

Zürich Opera, November 2019

All the more pleasing is what comes out of the raised orchestra pit. Under Laurence Cummings La Scintilla makes expressive and colorful music. The proven Baroque specialist lets the orchestra speak, sing, dance, flare individual lines, others sound brittle and pale. Always in line with the text.

Bruno Rauch, *ch-intercultur*

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Baumgarten has strong allies. Above all, the conductor Laurence Cummings, who creates a highly emotional, highly concentrated performance with the Orchestra La Scintilla.

Susanne Kübler, Tages Anzeiger

The stroke of luck takes place once again in the orchestra pit with the musicians of La Scintilla. The ensemble under Ada Pesch makes it easy for the Handel expert Laurence Cummings to craft his iridescent Baroque music into an inspiring and sparkling sound experience.

Joseph Auchter, seniorweb

Laurence Cummings on the podium of the in-house orchestra La Scintilla moves with flowing tempos and clear articulation at the height of today's Handel interpretation

Christian Wildhagen, Neue Zürcher Zeitung

"Orchestra La Scintilla", conducted by Handel specialist Laurence Cummings, captivates the late Baroque affect rhetoric and sends a multitude of colours into the sound space

Torbjörn Bergflödt, Südkurier

Monteverdi Vespers

Garsington Opera, The English Concert (July 2019)

the thrilling dynamism of the performances. Cummings's jumping exuberance (while managing to play the harpsichord and organ continuo as well) set the tone for a Vespers which wrung every grain of dramatic force from its setting of a mixed bag of Marian texts, rounded off with a Magnificat of jaw-dropping virtuosity... The Garsington chorus, swooping over a vast dynamic range, sometimes divided antiphonally in those upper galleries, and sometimes massed in a semicircular line behind the musicians of The English Concert. In sections such as the "Laetatus sum", the "Nisi dominus" and the farewell blast of "Sicut erat", their fortissimo climaxes matched for sheer theatrical impact anything on the Garsington (or any other operatic stage) this summer. There was delicate shading too in the meditative interludes, and fierce attention to words as well as sound

Boyd Tonkin, theartsdesk

Rodrigo

Göttingen Handel Festival, May 2019

Accompanied by a magnificent festival orchestra under the direction of Laurence Cummings, the soloists excelled in the festival's staging

Catherine Wenk, NDR Kultur

Saul

Göttingen Handel Festival, May 2019

Cummings challenges his Festival Orchestra, which combines specialists in historical performance practice, with accentuated playing and a great deal of dynamism, letting Baroque music shine. And Handel's compositions give the NDR choir the template to show how beautiful and radiant these melodies can be.

Christiane Böhm, Goettinger Tageblatt

Handel's last Prima Donna with Ruby Hughes

Göttingen Handel Festival, May 2019

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Laurence Cummings contributed a number of solo pieces: a suite by Handel, a sonata by Arne, and solo arrangements by Handelian Arias (*Lascia ch'io pianga*) and orchestral pieces (*arrival of the Queen of Sheba*). His harpsichord art is exquisite - his virtuoso playing breathes, is lively articulated, always finely phrased, colored.

Michael Schäfer, Goettinger Tageblatt

Handel & Co. with Dorothee Oberlinger Göttingen Handel Festival, May 2019

Cummings is by no means just a good companion, but lets his own musically strong personality in the interplay emerge quite well. Both, Oberlinger and Cummings, are equal, they bring in ideas, react to each other, behave like cultivated interlocutors in witty dialogue. Everything is subject to a sophisticated dramaturgy: even minimal breaks or small delays always happen together, even the breaks between the sentences are perfectly measured, so that the musical tension never breaks off.

Michael Schäfer, Goettinger Tageblatt

Berenice

Linbury Theatre, Royal Opera House Covent Garden / London Handel Festival 2019

And the staging also incorporates the instrumentalists, with three continuo players on stage and occasionally drawn into the merry pranks. That makes Laurence Cummings's achievement in holding together the music from the pit all the more impressive. His pacing of Handel's ear-tickling tunes is impeccable.

Richard Morrison, The Times ****

the London Handel Orchestra under Cummings's direction plays with quintessential Baroque grace and verve

Michael Church, Independent *****

Motivational conductor Laurence Cummings judges tempos nicely and the London Handel Orchestra produces endless quality tone

George Hall, The Stage ****

the performance here was first-rate, benefitting from the ideally intimate dimensions of the Linbury Theatre and its generous acoustic, as well as the crisp playing of the London Handel Orchestra sparkly conducted by Laurence Cummings

Rupert Christiansen, The Telegraph ****

Laurence Cummings conducts a whistle-stop, light-touch performance

Erica Jeal, The Guardian ****

Laurence Cummings draws expressive playing from the London Handel Orchestra

Barry Millington, Evening Standard ****

Ebb und Fluth

Hessischer Rundfunk Sinfonie Orchester, February 2019

With vigor and verve, the HR Symphonie Orchester conducted by English Baroque specialist Laurence Cummings showed in the Sendesaal why Telemann's overture "Hamburger Ebb und Fluth" was so successful at its performance in 1723...The second part of the programme was Handel's "Wassermusik" Suite. The orchestra left nothing to be desired in terms of liveliness, made music in a transparent and emotional way.

Frankfurter Neue Presse

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He builds on the ears of the musicians and on the pulling effect of the harpsichord. Then he does not have to conduct much, said Laurence Cummings in an introductory talk to the recent "Baroque +" concert in the broadcasting hall of the Hessischer Rundfunk in Frankfurt. The justified trust in the musicians of the hrSinfonieorchester, in their keen sense of playing with sounds and energies, in their ability to take responsibility for the whole and to contribute their very own part, was the certain something that gave this concert its enormous colour power, sound sensuality, warmth and vitality. Because the precise optical impulse of the conductor was missing, tiny blurs and thus a softness in the lecture, which was found to be soothing, especially in slow movements. Quick phrases were expected to decelerate, and a few obviously chattered inserts were eager to be heard, as well as the fundamental openness of that sound

Doris Kösterke, Rhein-Main-Zeitung

Saul

Glyndebourne Festival Opera, July 2018

it has a brilliant precision, and a largely new cast brings fresh energy to it, galvanised from the pit by Laurence Cummings and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment

Rupert Christiansen, The Telegraph *****

there is also the bustling Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment to enjoy, conducted again by Laurence Cummings, so devoted to the composer of *Saul* that Handel might be his middle name

Geoff Brown, The Times ****

the thrilling playing of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under the focused baton of conductor Laurence Cummings

George Hall, The Stage *****

the chorus is predictably excellent and Laurence Cummings and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment play the music with plenty of zest

Richard Fairman, Financial Times

Arminio

Göttingen Handel Festival, April 2018

Göttingen's artistic director, conductor Laurence Cummings, managed the musical ins and outs of this complicated operatic tale with his usually scrupulous balance and accomplishment.

Tom Sutcliffe, Opera Now

Handel's Last Prima Donna: Giulia Frasi

London Handel Festival, March 2018

Laurence Cummings turns even the rawest musical material into gold

Berta Joncus, BBC Music Magazine

Acis and Galatea

London Handel Festival, March 2018

Laurence Cummings took an approach to the score that was delightfully free of historically informed point-making, and the London Handel Orchestra responded with playing that matched precision with spontaneity

Yehuda Shapiro, Opera Magazine

Lotario

Goettingen Handel Festival Recording

Laurence Cummings

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[this] performance has a persuasive dramatic heart – due in large part to Laurence Cummings's expert direction of the excellent orchestra, which uses a satisfying variety of expressive rhetorical tools and aptly shaded textures **David Vickers, *Gramophone***

Saul

Theater an der Wien (February 2018)

Yet again the Arnold Schoenberg Chor and the Freiburger Barockorchester gave excellent performances, with Laurence Cummings drawing out the miraculous colours of this wonderful score with as much sensuality and intensity as possible.

Gehard Persché, *Opera Magazine*

The Freiburger Barockorchester have been known to sometimes sound somewhat restrained, but conductor Laurence Cummings animates the orchestra to new differentiated levels

Peter Jarolin, *Kurier*

In the pit is the Freiburger Barockorchester under Laurence Cummings. The Handel Specialist enlivens the somewhat unusual score (with little bravura and few recapitulations). A glockenspiel, a surprisingly well-employed organ, plus natural horns, provide great atmosphere and dynamics. A truly dramatic plane arises from the many instrumental solos and accompagnati, which complements the staging wonderfully

Jörn Florian Fuchs, *Badische Zeitung*

Handel's rich, enriching, wonderful music is presented by the Freiburger Barockorchester under the direction of Laurence Cummings in a pleasurable and sensual way. In particular, the rich strings and the woodwind establish the juicy and powerful changing colours of sound

Stefan Ender, *Der Standard*

In the pit: Laurence Cummings and the Freiburger Barockorchester - an ideal team. Whether in the melodious overture, which counterpoints the upcoming calamity, the sweetness of the glockenspiel and harp, or in the swinging tutti passages, the Brit courageously reaches into Handel's treasure chest and always keeps in close contact with the stage. David McVicar will have to work hard on the 'Ariodante' at the State Opera, ditto William Christie on the podium, because his former assistant Cummings has set the bar enormously high

Michael Tschida, *Kleine Zeitung*

The Freiburger Barockorchester under Laurence Cummings provides a brilliant Handel sound. Magnificent colours, especially in the strings and the natural horns, organ sound, and the glockenspiel show the capabilities of this music. This is opera where everything is right

Susanne Zobl, *News.at*

Handel's score, one of his richest orchestral and most colourful, is in excellent hands at the Theater an der Wien with the Freiburger Barockorchester under the English Handel expert Laurence Cummings...how beautifully the Freiburger Barockorchester perform these echo effects, how melodious is the dialogue spun between the oboes and violins, how vividly do the bassoons draw out their dark curves, before the illuminating strings return, how the harp and organ shine - this not only excites the ear, but also connects powerfully with the dramatic agenda

Walter Weldringer, *Die Presse*

Laurence Cummings at the Freiburger Barockorchester explored the numerous tonal colours of the work and proved himself an equal partner in the interplay between stage and pit, repeatedly igniting each other in drama and intensity

Judith Belfkih, *Wiener Zeitung*

Musically, the evening was in the hands of the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra under Laurence Cummings, who impressively and passionately translated the extraordinarily colorful score with the utmost precision and absolute eloquence, thus laying the foundation for a fine ensemble of singers

Michael Wruss, *öo Nachrichten*

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“Laurence Cummings drives the flexible instrumentalists through bouncy rhythms without curtailing their freedom of phrasing. They breathe beautifully in the pit, with smooth, infinitely-variable dynamics. A Handel for intelligently sharpened ears, but also for enjoyment. "Saul" with soul.” - *Klassiker Welt*

The Rake's Progress

Opera glass Works, Wilton's Music Hall (November 2017)

“Laurence Cummings at the harpsichord, costumed as an arresting combination of Handel and Hogarth ... led the players of the Southbank Sinfonia in a finely nuanced and detailed performance.” - **Henrietta Bredin, Opera Magazine**

“The Southbank Sinfonia is small – only one player to each string part – but stylish. The conductor is the baroque-music specialist Laurence Cummings, directing from the harpsichord and dressed in jacked and squishy velvet cap to look alarmingly like Handel. He paces things snappily and, as the evening progresses, increasingly gets in on the action.” – **Erica Jeal, The Guardian**

“this period-dress production scored in other ways. The interplay between art and life, artifice and truth, for instance. Laurence Cummings directs the spirited Southbank Sinfonia on stage, initially sporting a resplendent wig that would have made Handel jealous” – **Rebecca Franks, The Times**

“A costumed Laurence Cummings entered into the spirit with some baguette banter and a sure hand on the musical tiller (two on the harpsichord), although why the polished Southbank Sinfonia was not similarly decked in Hanoverian attire is a puzzle.” – **Mark Valencia, Whatsonstage**

“Occupying the rear of the stage – and sometimes engaged in the action – are the Southbank Sinfonia and conductor-harpsichordist Laurence Cummings, a Handel expert splendidly costumed as George Frideric himself. The warm Wilton's acoustic takes some Stravinskian edge off the instrumental sound, but it shows off the singers – and their words – to ideal effect” – **Yehuda Shapiro, The Stage**

Lucio Silla

Buxton International Festival (July 2017)

The English Concert, under Laurence Cummings, played beautifully.

Anthony Arblaster, Opera Now

A major asset is the stylish and sharply defined playing of The English Concert in the pit, while conductor Laurence Cummings superintends a performance with plenty of musical and dramatic clout

George Hall, The Stage

Terrific playing from the English Concert under Laurence Cummings's stylish direction

Richard Morrison, The Times

the English Concert were on superb form throughout under the experienced direction of Laurence Cummings – proving yet again that the principal prerequisite of a fine evening at the opera isn't the singers but an exceptional orchestra and conductor

David Mellor, Daily Mail

Brockes Passion

Goettingen Handel Festival 2017

However, largely thanks to having the superb Baroque specialist Laurence Cummings as artistic director, Göttingen easily rivals the Handel festival at the composer's birthplace, Halle...Cummings conducted the Brockes-Passion immaculately

Laurence Cummings

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Tom Sutcliffe, Opera Now

Lotario

Goettingen Handel Festival 2017

Cummings conducted the music beautifully...

Tom Sutcliffe, Opera Now

Joseph and his Brethren

London Handel Festival 2017

The performance a memorable resurrection of a libelled piece by Cummings and his spirited acolytes...Cummings attacked with his usual vigour, though the piece has a great variety of affect and feeling. There were few sections that didn't come to life

Robert Thicknesse, Opera Now

Faramondo

Royal College of Music, London Handel Festival 2017

Laurence Cummings' stylish conducting leaves us in no doubt as to the quality of the score, which contains some of Handel's most striking music. It all makes for cool, clever and deeply unnerving entertainment.

Tim Ashley, The Guardian

Handel expert Laurence Cummings presides over a stylish orchestral performance.

George Hall, The Stage

Laurence Cummings's London Handel Orchestra sounds sprightly and stylish in a score with many awkward corners

Richard Morrison, The Times

Orchestral playing was excellent under the always lively Laurence Cummings

Richard Fairman, Financial Times

The playing of the London Handel Orchestra, conducted by Laurence Cummings, is very fine indeed and contributes greatly to the undeniable strength of the evening.

Sam Smith, musicOMH

Handel: Water Music

Goettingen Festival Recording

Laurence Cummings makes the music dance and sing: touches like leaving the perky wind trios without continuo make the expressiveness of the strings as they enter all the more effective.

Nicholas Kenyon, The Guardian

The Paris Concert, March 2017

Scottish Chamber Orchestra

His Mozart Paris Symphony was a delight, full of gesture and rhetoric – seldom can its first movement's rushing scales have had so much sheer meaning – but superbly balanced in a buoyant slow movement

David Kettle, The Scotsman ****

Handel: Messiah

National Symphony Orchestra, Washington DC, December 2016

Laurence Cummings

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On Thursday, he certainly showed himself to be a major Handelian in this fluid, fleet, fine-feeling reading. Rapid passagework in Baroque music can sound finicky, with a kind of sewing-machine needling; but time and again, Cummings encouraged playing and singing that were smooth, gentle, even tender

Anne Midgette, *The Washington Post*

He brought an easy authority to the score, conducting from one of the two harpsichords in the orchestra, augmented nicely by portative organ in the larger pieces...Cummings emphasized the more operatic qualities of the work

Charles T. Downey, *Washington Classical Review*

Handel: *Susanna*

Goettingen Handel Festival Recording

Laurence Cummings's new version with Göttingen festival forces captures fully the uplifting, pastoral, ethereal vision...Beautiful

Nicholas Kenyon, *The Guardian*

Purcell programme, Wigmore Hall Live

A Baroque supergroup (...) and the results are as glorious as you'd imagine

Alexandra Coghlan, *Gramophone*

Handel: *Tamerlano*

Buxton International Festival, July 2016

The English Concert played beautifully under Laurence Cummings

Anthony Arblaster, *Opera Now*

Handel: *Imeneo*

Göttingen Handel Festival, May 2016

...thanks to Cummings' perfect pacing and the infectiously catchy phrasing he draws from his excellent orchestra and cast.

Shirley Apthorp, *The Financial Times* ****

It's only appropriate, given the composer's long association with England, that two of these festivals – London and Göttingen – are now directed by an Englishman. Laurence Cummings has spent a career with this music, and his affection, understanding and excitement radiates out through the dancing energy of his instrumentalists and the emotional pitch of his singers.

Alexandra Coghlan, *The Spectator*

Laurence Cummings conducted with real energy and characteristic taste... Göttingen's *Imeneo* was both a vocal, musical and theatrical triumph, and one that genuinely added to our sense of Handel's range and theatrical imagination – which is why this important festival exists.

Tom Sutcliffe, *Opera Now*

The FestspielOrchester Göttingen maintained its very high standard under the festival's artistic director Laurence Cummings, starting with a sonorous but gutsy rendition of the overture and continuing throughout with warmth and precision, always respecting the needs of the singers.

Sandra Bowdler, *Opera Magazine*

Handel: *Ariodante*

London Handel Festival, March 2016

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As always, the strength of the festival's opera offerings is found down in the orchestra pit, where Laurence Cummings and the London Handel Orchestra brought *Ariodante* to life with vitality and emotional depth.

Richard Fairman, *The Financial Times*

**Purcell: *King Arthur*
Opernhaus Zurich, February 2016**

The Overture had a completely different tint: led by Laurence Cummings, La Scintilla Orchestra played it with the warmth and softness that makes Purcell's music come alive.

Susanne Kübler, *Tages Anzeiger*

***Con Eco d'Amore* – Scarlatti with Elizabeth Watts
The English Concert (Harmonia Mundi)**

The English Concert play with verve and warmth.

Stephen Pettitt, *The Sunday Times*

The playing of The English Concert [is] first-rate... Laurence Cummings always has a precise ear for texture and colour.

Richard Wigmore, *Gramophone*

Watts, Cummings and the English Concert make an ideal partnership in what is one of the most thrilling albums of its kind I've heard in recent years; I can't recommend this recording highly enough.

Adrian Horsewood, *Early Music Today*

This disc fizzles. Watts and director Laurence Cummings give us a dazzling sequence of numbers drawn from operas, serenatas and cantatas which leave one desperately wanting a second helping.

Graham Rickson, *The Arts Desk*

**Handel: *Saul*
Glyndebourne on Tour, October 2015**

The theatricality of Handel's score knocks the wind from your lungs. The conductor Laurence Cummings has galvanised Glyndebourne's touring orchestra into a performance as playful and soulful and stylish as that on stage: acerbic in the opening allegro of the Overture, giddy with invention in the miniature concertos for chamber organ, the musical arguments dynamically phrased and punctuated throughout.

Anna Picard, *The Times* *****

Barrie Kosky's production for Glyndebourne, the highlight of this summer's festival, now returns with a fresh cast for the autumn tour, under the baton – a coup – of Laurence Cummings. As artistic director both of the London Handel festival and the Internationale Händel-Festspiele Göttingen, he now ranks as one of the composer's best advocates in the world. Self-effacing on the podium, faithful above all to the score, he matches Handel's energy and invention with unmistakable lyricism, generosity and dignity. It's not that others don't or can't; rather that Cummings makes it feel the only conceivable approach, drawing the music out, not driving it along. Nipping from podium to keyboard, he also plays the solo organ.

Fiona Maddocks, *The Observer* *****

Laurence Cummings, perhaps the country's most experienced Handelian, never lets Kosky's theatricality overwhelm the music however mad it gets.

Mark Valencia, *WhatsOnStage.com*

Laurence Cummings

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The musical direction by Laurence Cummings [is] even more eloquent than when the production was first seen in July...

Melanie Eskenazi, *Music OMH* ****

Handel: *Agrippina*

Göttingen Handel Festival, May 2015

Good though the singers are, they are almost eclipsed by the vivid, virtuosic Festival Orchestra. Laurence Cummings keeps rollickingly on track, with unflagging energy and musicality. Well worth the journey. **Shirley Apthorp, *The Financial Times***

Laurence Cummings, artistic director of the festival, had lot of fun with the interpretation of this material. Even in the famous overture to his FestspielOrchester did out: Both the tremolos and the unexpected pause in which Handel the dissolution of a final cadence is guilty and subsequently supply only a few bars later, took his ensemble with sensitivity and playfulness.

Jonas Rohde, *Goettinger Tageblatt*

Giove in Argo

London Handel Festival, March 2015

Conducted by Laurence Cummings, it sounds terrific.

Tim Ashley, *The Guardian* ****

Under the driving direction of conductor Laurence Cummings and the spirited playing of the London Handel Orchestra, the evening flashed by.

Stephen Pritchard, *The Observer* ****

What it does have, however, are excellent musical values. In the pit Laurence Cummings presides over an orchestra that scampers stylishly through Handel's jaw-droppingly inventive arias.

Richard Morrison, *The Times* ****

We're carried along on the swift speeds and stylish delivery of Laurence Cummings and his band, supporting the excellent student chorus.

Alexandra Coghlan, *The Spectator*

Handel: *Joshua* – ACC 26403

Göttingen Handel Festival Recording, March 2015

Cummings directs a compelling live performance.

Stephen Pettitt, *The Sunday Times*

Handel: *Semele*

London Handel Festival, March 2015

Cummings' London Handel Orchestra soon found their spark, while the London Handel Singers delighted from the start.

Geoff Brown, *The Times* *****

Handel: *The Indian Queen*

English National Opera, February 2015

With outstanding soloists, with the ENO chorus in coruscating form, and with Laurence Cummings and his period instrumentalists

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

generating transcendent beauty in the pit, this is an evening in musical heaven.

Michael Church, *The Independent* *****

The ENO Orchestra under Laurence Cummings delivered Purcell's score with the ideal balance of refinement and drama.

Owen Mortimer, *Opera Now*

[Laurence Cummings] indulges in daringly slow tempi and pregnant pauses to produce a backdrop for singing that melts the heart.

Barry Millington, *The Evening Standard* ****

Stylishly conducted by Laurence Cummings.

Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph* ****

The music itself is glorious... [with] Laurence Cummings' stylish conducting...

Tim Ashley, *The Guardian*

Songs and anthems by Purcell have been added to make a full evening's drama, supremely well conducted by Laurence Cummings.

Fiona Maddocks, *The Observer*

Laurence Cummings led an orchestra spiked with a few Baroque instruments, its playing crisp and attentive to the leader.

Russ McDonald, *Opera Magazine*

***Faramondo* – ACC 26402**

Göttingen Handel Festival Recording, November 2014

Laurence Cummings, a very experienced and accomplished exponent of Handel's music, conducts... Cummings and his orchestra do full justice to the music.

John T. Hughes, *International Record Review*

Laurence Cummings and his expert Göttingen Festival Orchestra produce a fine account of this undervalued opera, with varied orchestral subtleties and a sure mastery of Handelian style in this fully staged production recorded live last June.

David Vickers, *Gramophone Magazine*

***Siroe, Re di Persia* – ACC 26401**

Göttingen Handel Festival Recording, October 2014

With Laurence Cummings at the helm, and the hand-picked FestspielOrchester Göttingen in stirring form, the performance is energetic and committed. Cummings has an ability to push the momentum through from recitative to aria and back again with naturalness and urgency, so that all seems of a piece.

Lindsay Kemp, *Gramophone Magazine*

The Coronation of Poppea

Opera North, October 2014

Opera North's gripping new production.... The stage and musical directors, Tim Albery and Laurence Cummings, have devised a bare-essentials edition of Monteverdi's last opera (first seen in Venice in 1643), an apotheosis of lust and lust for power that seems bang up to date... great ensemble achievements.

Hugh Canning, *Sunday Times*

Laurence Cummings' musical direction was both alert and sensitive.

Anthony Arblaster, *Opera Now*

Faramondo

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

Göttingen Handel Festival, June 2014

The Festspiel Orchester has reached a peak under the festival director Laurence Cummings, and it blended smoothly while exuding great energy.

Sandra Bowdler, *Opera Magazine*

The Festspiel Orchester Göttingen and conductor Laurence Cummings handled the fireworks of the score with aplomb while also creating numerous moments of crystalline beauty; any drama, however complex, would become completely comprehensible if afforded the dedication of such ardent advocates as in Göttingen.

Adrian Horsewood, *Opera Now*

Arianna in Creta

London Handel Festival, March 2014

Graciously conducted by Laurence Cummings, it sounds good. The London Handel festival has done this work proud.

Tim Ashley, *The Guardian* ****

Vivaciously conducted by Laurence Cummings. The performance had the infectious advocacy of Cummings and his orchestra.

Andrew Clark, *Financial Times*

The chief musical pleasures were provided by Laurence Cummings's lively direction of his hand-picked London Handel Orchestra in the pit.

Hugh Canning, *Opera Magazine*

Orpheus and Eurydike

Goteborgs Opera, February 2014

When it is played with such sensible sensuality, rhythmic accuracy and dramatic rigor of the Gothenburg Opera Orchestra under Laurence Cummings... Göteborg Opera's Orpheus and Eurydice is world class throughout.

Lennart Bromander, *Aftonbladet Kultur*

Lorraine Hunt Lieberson Memorial Concert at Lincoln Centre

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, August 2013

The concert glowed with the evident joy the musicians brought to Handel's music. Mr. Cummings conducted from the harpsichord with infectious energy and good humor, rhythmically bouncing in his seat and whipping up breezy crescendos with broad arm gestures. The impression that lingered strongest after the concert was of the freshness of Handel's music, which these musicians played with an exploratory passion as if it had been written yesterday.

Corinna da Fonseca-Wollheim, *The New York Times*

Siroe, Re di Persia

Göttingen Handel Festival, May 2013

This is new artistic director Laurence Cummings' first opera in Göttingen, and it must count as a high point in the festival's history...

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

Together, Cummings and Karaman have created an evening of Handel that looks and sounds as fresh as if it had been written yesterday.

On the podium, Cummings hits every tempo bang in the middle, so that phrases are light and airy, architecture is solid yet soaring, recitatives feel like free speech, and it is often hard not to stand up and dance. His orchestra is superb.

This is both musical discovery and pure joy; this is how Handel should be.

Shirley Apthorp, *Financial Times* *****

Handel: *Imeneo*, London Handel Festival Royal College of Music, March 2013

Laurence Cummings's period London Handel Orchestra gave immense pleasure from the Britten Theatre's tiny pit, with judicious tempos and forward propulsion where appropriate. All of which meant that *Imeneo*, in any case one of Handel's shorter operas, never overstayed its welcome.

Hugh Canning, *Opera Magazine*

From curtain up, Laurence Cummings and the London Handel Orchestra get the sparks to fly.

Richard Fairman, *The Financial Times* ****

It was a bold stroke for conductor Laurence Cummings to open the London Handel Festival with a production of this rarity by singers from the Royal College of Music. But these singers have excellent comic timing, and under Paul Curran's direction manage to do full justice both to their characters and to the demands of the score – vintage Handel and, as Cummings and his period-instrument ensemble deliver it, wonderfully rich and varied.

Michael Church, *The Independent*

The evening's best feature is the playing of the London Handel Orchestra under Laurence Cummings.

George Hall, *The Guardian*

Laurence Cummings and the London Handel Festival Orchestra were able to offer us a musical interpretation of the highest order; in fact the orchestra last night could have given Concerto Köln a run for their money, such was the energy, verve and commitment given to this attractive if neglected score.

Miranda Jackson, *Opera Britannia*

In the pit, Laurence Cummings and the London Handel Orchestra presented a firestorm of flashy volins and whirlwind oboes. Sometimes you long for Cummings to calm down when Handel engages with the heartbreak of his characters; but for sheer excitement it's unbeatable.

Opera Now

Bach: *Magnificat in D* Christ Church Spitalfields, December 2012

There was the English Concert's festival night at Christ Church Spitalfields, when Laurence Cummings directed superbly poised period accounts of Bach's *Magnificat in D* and his cantata 'Schwingt freudig euch empor', BWV36.

Paul Driver, *Sunday Times Review*

Handel: *Messiah* Opera de Lyon, December 2012

Conducted by a long-standing Handel expert like Laurence Cummings, the orchestra, through their adoption of phrases that mirror the specialized training of the music of the era, make the audience completely forget that they are playing on modern instruments.

Laurent Bury, *Forum Opera*

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

SALE, Zurich Opera House

...conductor Laurence Cummings (who sings "Comfort Ye" from the podium), is universally excellent. Cummings has style and lets the phrases breathe; his orchestra plays well. For chorus numbers, the singers are joined by the actors, who can all hold a musical line.

Shirley Apthorp, *Financial Times*

...one of the most surprising and flawless performances comes from the conductor, when he turns around to us and sings the *Messiah* recitative "Comfort ye my people" in a very fine tenor. Laurence Cummings is an important musical figure in London, and has recently taken over the artistic direction of the Göttingen Handel Festival. His direction of the Zurich baroque band La Scintilla inspires SALE. Whether the music is pensive or stormy, the performance is of a high order. The famous "Lascia ch'io pianga" becomes a wonderfully heartfelt chorus and, thanks to Cummings, even the actors have impeccable intonation here.

Badische Zeitung

...It is not surprising that the musicians, quite the contrary to the stage direction team, are rapturously applauded. Leading the way is the in-house Baroque ensemble *La Scintilla* under Laurence Cummings. Cummings, new head of the Handel Festival Göttingen, is an experienced baroque specialist who advocates speedy tempos, a bright sound and a thrilling approach.

Reinhard J. Brembeck, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*

Cummings has one of his best nights on this occasion, so that overture, adagio, andante, sonatas, ensembles, duets, trios, arias from various opera and oratorios are performed with great intensity.

Marinella Polli, *Corriere del Ticino*

There is much to admire. Not least La Scintilla Orchestra which displayed entrancing sensuality.

Peter Hagmann, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*

...One is kept awake by the music...and this is Laurence Cummings's achievement. Under the baton of the musically and # energetically vibrant British conductor, La Scintilla plays with wonderful colour, brilliance and intensity.

Bruno Rauch, *Bündner Tagblatt*

Handel: *Judas Maccabaeus*

BBC Proms

Under Laurence Cummings's direction, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment was not going to batter our ears.

Rather, it caressed them with sounds of tenderness: the mellow tones of wooden flutes accompanying the duetting soprano and mezzo in "Oh lovely peace", the gently abrasive trumpets that hail "the conqu'ring hero". This was period instrument playing of subtlety, flexibility and grace.

Nick Kimberley, *The Evening Standard*

Laurence Cummings conducted the Choir of the Enlightenment and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment...Everything was done with exceptional finesse, from the finely detailed playing to the superbly moulded choral singing

Tim Ashley, *The Guardian* ****

The Fairy Queen

Glyndebourne Festival Opera

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

With the Baroque maestro Laurence Cummings now at the helm things have settled marvellously

Michael Church, *The Independent* [5 ***]**

it is Cummings and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, performing Purcell's score with warmth, precision and a thrilling vitality, who ultimately steal the show.

Laura Battle, *The Financial Times* *****

The performance at this revival was outstanding. Laurence Cummings...drew consistently beautiful sounds from the OAE, especially from the string section, who were the glory of Purcell's astonishing score.

Roger Parker, *Opera*

Laurence Cummings, chief among the gutsiest and most invigorating of period specialists, sets aside rougher textures for the most tender account of Purcell's score, favouring sweetness and legato sway over brusquer articulation. Dance rhythms are tight and clean but heard as though from another world, transfigured like Shakespeare's own mortals in this enchanted wood.

Alexandra Coghlan, *The Art's Desk*

the musicians of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment deliver the score with striking character under the baton of Laurence Cummings... It's an enchanting spectacle, not to be missed.

George Hall, *The Stage*

Laurence Cummings' energy seems to know no bounds; fresh from conducting Judas Maccabeus at the proms the previous night, here he coaxes an almost frenetic performance from the orchestra, attentive to every detail and accompanying the singers with his customary sensitive support.

Alexandra Coghlan, *What's on Stage*

Vivaldi: *L'Olimpiade* Garsington Opera

Laurence Cummings's musical direction (including a subtle paste-in, Vivaldi-style, of *Chariots of Fire*) of a new critical edition of the opera, played superbly on modern instruments, was inspired and inspiring throughout.

Hilary Finch, *The Times*

Laurence Cummings seeks out the essential character of every aria, allowing Vivaldi, on this occasion, to knock Mozart into second place.

George Hall, *The Guardian* ****

Its score mixes breathtakingly lyrical invention with all the exhilaration typical of the composer, and conductor Laurence Cummings balances these elements in a tightly paced performance.

John Allison, *The Telegraph*

L'Olimpiade is not all top-drawer Vivaldi but some of it is and Laurence Cummings's alert but sensitive direction ensured that the most was made of those numbers.

Barry Millington, *The Evening Standard* ****

the production was delightful and the performance excellent...The performance featured an accomplished young cast and the fine conducting of Laurence Cummings, an early-music specialist, who drew crisp, textured playing from the orchestra and led the continuo section from the harpsichord.

Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times*

Thanks to judicious cuts and Cummings's pacey conducting *L'Olimpiade* seemed the worthiest of Garsington's Vivaldi resurrections.

Hugh Canning, *Opera Magazine*

Conductor Laurence Cummings serves up the full glory of the score in this new Garsington production. His incisive direction from the harpsichord draws crisp and buoyant playing from the pit musicians - a stylish period sound on modern instruments.

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

Graham Rogers, *The Stage*

Handel: *Esther*

Goettingen International Handel Festival, 2012

Cummings showed not the smallest doubt in the material, and together with the Göttingen Festival Orchestra – not the biggest names but truly the superstars of the festival – coaxed a reading that smote and seduced by turns, supporting the lighter voice of Daniel Taylor's tender Mordecai, anchoring Sophie Junker's Israelite woman, and growing to match and rival Sampson...and Davies for virtuosity. With pacy tempos and choral episodes that grew in assurance and character as the evening progressed...*Esther* was a stylish promise of things to come under Cummings's direction.

Alexandra Coghlan, *The ArtsDesk.com*

Bach, St Matthew Passion

St George's, Hanover Square

With Laurence Cummings directing from the harpsichord/organ, and some fine principals heading the chorus of the period-instrument London Handel Orchestra, this towering masterpiece was in ideal hands. Though the forces were small, it was clear that Bach's scoring for two orchestras and choruses would work powerfully, and the opening phrase 'Come ye daughters, share my mourning' seemed to surge up out of the earth...Thanks to Cummings's furious momentum, the symmetrical contours of this great edifice came splendidly clear, and its alternations of chaos, rage, and celestial calm were presented to greater effect than is ever possible in a concert performance.

Michael Church, *the Independent* ****

Handel: *Riccardo Primo*

London Handel Festival 2012

The overture – starring oboes, bassoons, and sundry flutes – sets a cracking pace which the London Handel Orchestra under the direction of Laurence Cummings ably replicates.

Michael Church, *The Independent*

As ever, the orchestral performance under Laurence Cummings was scintillating, propelled by a peppery bassoon, archlute, cello, bass and two harpsichords. It is this vivacity, and the rarity of the repertoire, that accounts for the loyalty of the festival's audience.

Anna Picard, *The Independent on Sunday*

It helped that musical standards were expert and rigorous. The orchestral writing, vividly executed by the LHF orchestra, is full of invention, with trilling, bird-like recorders, "royal" horns, trumpets and drums, tempestuous string passages and delicate word painting. The conductor Laurence Cummings kept a fine balance between unforced phrasing and breathless vigour. Now one of the composer's most sought-after champions, he has been LHF director since 1999 and next month takes up the same directorial role at the illustrious Göttingen Handel festival in Germany. His bobbing enthusiasm can turn Handel opera agnostics, myself among them, into wild-eyed converts ready to sign the pledge.

Fiona Maddocks, *The Guardian*

Cummings has raised the standard of the London Handel Orchestra's playing over his ten years in charge, and he relished the thrilling storm music which succeeds the magnificent overture and paced the music with sufficient verve and forward thrust to disguise the opera's creaky dramatic structure. *Riccardo Primo* may not be one of Handel's triumphs, but these performances justified its revival.

Hugh Canning, *Opera Magazine*

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

audiences return, lured by the energy of the festival's Musical Director Laurence Cummings...Cummings' orchestra are all guttural punch and swaggering dance, and the trumpets, oboes, recorders and flute add welcome dimension and colour to the action – kept mercifully efficient by Cummings' tempos.

Alexandra Coghlan, *The Art's Desk*

Handel: *Messiah*

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment

Much of this performance seemed right and appropriate. Laurence Cummings conducted an OAE trimmed down to a size Handel would have recognised from the first London performances of *Messiah*, with doubled oboes and bassoons adding the only extra colour to the original scoring for strings and trumpets. The Choir of the Enlightenment fielded only 22 people, yet they sung with admirable focus and feeling, and patient attention to Handel's masterful word-painting.

Neil Fisher, *The Times*

Handel: *La Verità in Cimento*

Garsington Opera

...conductor Laurence Cummings sets about every number with almost breathless enthusiasm.

Richard Fairman, *Financial Times*

All praise, however, to Laurence Cummings, the enthused conductor of an animated orchestra...

Rupert Christiansen, *Daily Telegraph*

Laurence Cummings's conducting is witty and passionate...

Tim Ashley, *The Guardian*

...lovingly played here by leading period-instrument soloists under Laurence Cummings...

Amanda Holloway, *Opera Magazine*

Conductor Laurence Cummings makes his enthusiasm for the music clear, as he weaves, bobs and zooms to show the beat of Vivaldi's elaborate score.

Paul Levy, *Wall Street Journal*

Conductor Laurence Cummings encourages precise and elegant playing from the orchestra. **Christopher Gray, *Oxford Times***

Laurence Cummings conducts a spry account of the score

George Hall, *The Stage*

Handel: *Rodelinda*

London Handel Festival

Laurence Cummings, the festival's musical director, gets inside the music, drawing highly expressive playing from his period instrument London Handel Orchestra and, partly because he rarely lingers, sweeping the singers along with him.

Richard Fairman, *Financial Times*

Cummings favours brisk, muscular playing, which the experienced London Handel Orchestra provided unstintingly...

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

Fiona Maddocks, *The Observer*

Laurence Cummings conducts this rewarding cast and London Handel Orchestra at exhilarating tempi, lickety-split. A joy from start to finish.

Laurie Lewis, *The Independent*

...with Laurence Cummings briskly directing the gutsy London Handel Orchestra...

Geoff Brown, *The Times*

In the pit, Laurence Cummings conducts an outstanding assemblage of baroque players.

George Hall, *The Guardian*

Emotional sincerity...was something we had in excess: the swaggering attack of the London Handel Orchestra's Overture under the direction of Laurence Cummings; the plaintive obbligato flute solo in "Ombre, piante"; the impassioned grief of Eleonor Dennis's Rodelinda... It's a production that deserves another outing...

Alexandra Coghlan, *The Arts Desk*

The festival's music director Laurence Cummings conducted the orchestra of baroque players with verve. What a pity there were only four performances.

Clare Colvin, *The Express*

Handel: *Alcina*

Gothenburg Opera

...An uncommonly expressive but dark, *Alcina* and musically nothing short of sensational...the orchestra – under Laurence Cummings' direction – plays with wonderful sensualism and excellent articulation.

Lennart Bromander, *Aftonbladet*

In Gothenburg Opera's pit conductor Laurence Cummings leads the ensemble and orchestra; dynamic, precise and vibrant.

Gunilla Brodrej, *Expressen*

We are given lots of greys, blacks and whites. A colour scheme that articulates the elevated archaic traits of the drama and creates friction against the sensualism pouring out of the orchestra, brilliantly led by baroque specialist Laurence Cummings.

Martin Nyström, *Dagens Nyheter*

Conductor Laurence Cummings unfolds the arias calmly, systematic and implacably. Both orchestra and soloists are well served...

Bo Löfvendahl, *Svenska Dagbladet*

Yes, this is – as you may understand – a performance outside of the ordinary. The orchestra, under British baroque specialist Laurence Cummings plays with a dreamlike lightness and precision, as if the musicians have been positively bewitched.

Magnus Haglund, *Göteborgs-posten*

Handel: *Radamisto*

English National Opera

English National Opera has assembled a magnificent cast, galvanised by the crisply phrased, speedy conducting of Laurence Cummings and stylish orchestral playing.

Rupert Christiansen, *Daily Telegraph*

So it looks great – how does it sound? Better. Laurence Cummings directs with his customary verve and he's made very free with embellishments that have his sopranos pipping the high Bs and Cs like there was no tomorrow.

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

Edward Seckerson, *Independent*

[there is] no lack of effort or stylishness on the part of cast and orchestra conducted by Laurence Cummings

Andrew Clark, *Financial Times*

Laurence Cummings whips the orchestra into a frenzy of dancing semiquavers and sexily-swung French trills...the singing and playing are marvellous

Anna Picard, *Independent on Sunday*

aided by Laurence Cummings's sympathetic accompaniments

Barry Millington, *Evening Standard*

Laurence Cummings conducts with alacrity

George Hall, *The Stage*

Handel: *Giulio Cesare* Glyndebourne

The fundamentally neo-Classical décor is matched by an appropriate sound, the scrupulous efforts of Laurence Cummings and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Opera Magazine

Handel: *Alcina* Royal College of Music

top-rank playing from Laurence Cummings's laser-sharp band

Opera Now

Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra

Deftly juggling duties as director and harpsichordist was Britain's Laurence Cummings, in his Minnesota debut. Born in 1968, Cummings has emerged as one of his generation's leading baroque-era specialists, at home in both opera house and concert hall. There is nothing routine in Cummings' approach to his repertoire. Before the orchestra Friday, he was vigor incarnate, a man possessed by the music's rhythmic impulse and its play of moods. Bounding from his bench like a jack-in-the-box, one hand on the keyboard as the other sliced the air, he had the SPCO sounding as stylish as any period band, modern sonorities notwithstanding; the strings, in particular, combined clarity and warmth to a rare degree.

Larry Fuchsberg, *Star Tribune*

Cummings is a major player on the baroque music scene, especially in his native England, where he heads the London Handel Festival. Friday night marked his Minnesota debut, as he led the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra in an exceptionally well-performed collection of concertos (plus a J.S. Bach Orchestral Suite) at Wayzata Community Church. If you need a reminder of what a great baroque band we have in the SPCO, these are the concerts to catch, for you're unlikely to hear a better performance of that era's music in the Twin Cities this year.

Rob Hubbard, *Pioneer Press*

Handel: *Tolomeo* London Handel Festival

Laurence Cummings drew stylish, spirited playing from his London Handel Orchestra and paced [...] the work adroitly.

Laurence Cummings

Selected Reviews

Rodney Milnes, *Opera Magazine*

Handel Arias recording
Angelika Kirchschrager

Virtuos, durchsichtig, klangschön und im besten Sinne begleitend musiziert der Kammerorchester Basel; Laurence Cummings am Pult sorgt für exzellente Balance und durchweg flotte, dabei nie hastige Tempi.

W. Borches, *Das Opernglas*