



Xavier Sabata

Countertenor

HANDEL *Agrippina* (Ottone), *Il Pomo d'Oro*, Maxim Emelyanychev, European tour

...Fagioli's steely bravura found a foil in fellow countertenor Xavier Sabata's mellower Ottone.

Rebeccah Franks, The Times, June 2019

Xavier Sabata brought warmth to the part of Ottone...

Richard Fairman, The Financial Times, June 2019

I much preferred the gentler, warmer sound radiating from Xavier Sabata, who sang Ottone's exquisitely melancholy "Voi ch'udite" with heartfelt sincerity.

Rupert Christiansen, The Daily Telegraph, June 2019

As Ottone, Xavier Sabata had a beautiful countertenor

Sam Smith, Music OMH, June 2019

Xavier Sabata's sweetly sincere Ottone ... There are no sharp edges on Sabata's baroque flute of a countertenor. Soft-grained and woody it makes for an exquisite "Vaghe fonti", duetting delightfully with the two solo recorders. Where Sabata is creamy smooth

Alexandra Coghlan, The Arts Desk, June 2019

By contrast Xavier Sabata's Ottone and Elsa Benoit's Poppea stood out for the sobriety of their portrayals in the only two really sincere roles in the opera, both sounding pure and mellifluous

Curtis Rogers, Classicalsource.com, June 2019

Countertenor Xavier Sabata convinced as Claudio's loyal general Ottone, for whom true love was more important than ascending to the imperial throne. In another of Handel's wonderful duets for voice and oboe, 'Voi che udite mio lamento', Sabata sang with heart-breaking sweetness of tone.

Chris Sallon, Seen and Heard International, June 2019

Ottone sied comme un gant à Xavier Sabata : sa grande voix assez unique parmi ses collègues contre-ténors est ici parfaitement employée. Son 'Voi che udite il mio lamento' est le moment le plus émouvant de la soirée.

Ottone fits Xavier Sabata like a glove: his full voice rather unique among counter-tenor colleagues, is here perfectly used. His 'Voi che udite il mio lamento' is the most moving moment of the evening.

Guillaume Saintagne, Forumopera.com, June 2019

Ottone ... the outstanding countertenor #2, a lyrical, showstopping Xavier Sabata)...

Richard Sasnow, Broadway World, June 2019

L'Alessandro Amante, Vespres D'Arnadi, Dani Espasa, CD

... a singer whose work has always combined beauty, intelligence and psychological perception in equal measure...Sabata sings this complex programme with his customary elegance and flair. His dark, warm alto has always

sounded good in slower arias, where the long lines flow with ease and his breath control is exemplary.... His coloratura, always placed at the service of characterisation or drama, can be spectacular.

Tim Ashley, Gramophone, April 2019

Sabata is now firmly established as one of the leading lights in the large constellation of countertenor stars.... The intrinsic beauty of his well-rounded voice, and a technique that allows him to articulate *passaggi* with fluent panache... There is, too, much evidence of musical intelligence.

Brian Robins, Opera, May 2019

Timbre velouté, intonations parfaites... Les ornements précis se fondent dans l'expression tour à tour et -parfois en même temps- véhémence, extatique ou tendre.

Velvety timbre, intonation as perfect as the diction ... Precise ornaments merge into the expression alternately and sometimes at the same time vehement, ecstatic or tender.

Bénédicte Palaux Simonnet, Crescendo-magazine.be, May 2019

Throughout Sabata consistently produces his outstanding countertenor voice which has radiance and a bright decisive tone with surprising warmth.. Sabata is in stunning form, singing with glorious expression, believably portraying Alexander's intense yearning to return to his lover after the end of the battle. From the same serenade is the aria 'Da tuoi lumi' sung with great appeal, focus and clarity. Sabata affords palpable sensitivity to the meaning of the text and displays impressive breath control. Also outstanding is the Handel aria 'Vano amore' from his opera *Alessandro*, the title role originally created by Senesino. Here Sabata provides a determined portrayal of the great hero that absolutely fizzes along, generating often frantic anxiety and bitterness, the soloist responding tremendously to the significant coloratura demands.

Michael Cookson, musicwebinternational.com, May 2019

Arias by Handel, Bononcini, Pescetti, Vinci, Leo and Mancini offer a smorgasbord of musical styles and an opportunity for Sabata and the brilliant *Vespres D'Arnadí* under Dani Espasa to display their copious technical and artistic abilities.

Will Yeoman, Limelight Magazine, May 2019

CASABLANCAS, *L'enigma di Lea (Dr Schicksal)*, Teatro del Liceu, Barcelona

With his remarkable and histrionic and vocal powers, it was Xavier Sabata as Schicksal who brought the most life and energy to the performance.

Josep Maria Vidal, Opera, May 2019

STRADELLA *La Doriclea, Il Pomo d'Oro*, CD

Xavier Sabata's Fibaldo, who turns ornaments more pleasingly than anyone

Brian Robins, Opera, May 2019

HANDEL *Ottone, Il Pomo d'Oro, Petrou*. CD

...the beauty of Xavier Sabata's countertenor gives his lustful Adelberto a drooping, honeyed tone entirely appropriate for an aria such as 'Bel labbro'...
Brian Robins, Opera, August 2017

... he [Xavier Sabata] brings emotionality and intelligence to the role of Adelberto, delivering an exquisitely poised account of 'Bel labbro'.
Anna Picard, BBC Music Magazine September 2017

**CESTI L'Oronhea – Frankfurt Opera and Museum Orchestra, Monteverdi
Continuo Ensemble, Ivor Bolton. CD**

There are stylish performances from Guy de Mey and the countertenor, Xavier Sabata, who makes an impressive debut in the role of the destitute painter Alidoro.

Iain Fenlon, Gramophone, June 2017

CATHARSIS CD - Armonia Atenea / Petrou

... a supple, communicative voice that is honeyed and forthright by turns.

Erica Jeal, The Guardian, March 2016

...this recital album's intelligent variety of dramatic atmospheres give Xavier Sabata and Armonia Atenea a vivid workout. The music-making is never devoid of interest and richness ...

David Vickers, Gramophone, May 2017

...his singing of lyrical music is unfailingly rewarding, especially since he also boasts an excellent *messa di voce*... Sabata is also excellent with *passaggi*, articulating with precision and a high level of musicality...

Brian Robins, Opera, August 2017

Polinesso Ariodante – Scottish Opera

In his first fully staged role in a British production, Sabata adds swagger and star quality, using his huge hands, opulent vibrato and baritone laughter with panache.

Anna Picard, The Sunday Times, February 2016

At the heart of that cycle is Ariodante's love rival, Polinesso. In the expert hands of Catalan counter-tenor Xavier Sabata, this evil schemer becomes a cross between cartoon cad Dick Dastardly and Shakespeare's loathsome villain Iago.

Mark Brown, The Telegraph, February 2016

Tamerlano –Il Pomo d'Oro - Barbican Hall, London

You could also cherish sections of Xavier Sabata's Tamerlano (honeyed but heated) ...

Geoff Brown, The Times, November 2015

I Dilettanti CD - Latinitas Nostra / Chryssicos

Then there's Sabata's singing, intelligent yet risky, and frequently deploying baritone chest tones as well as his immaculate alto. ... Outstanding.

5 Stars, Tim Ashley, The Guardian, January 2015



HANDEL *Bad Guys* CD – Il Pomo d'Oro / Minasi

Sabata has one of the richest of counter-tenor voices, his warmth of tone carrying intimations of decadence. A perceptive vocal actor, he gets to the essence of his protagonists... The beauty of Sabata's singing is breathtaking, however unsettling his characters...

Tim Ashley, The Guardian, February 2013