

ASITHA TENNEKOON

TENOR



2017 DORA AWARD – OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE, MALE, OPERA DIVISION –
ROCKING HORSE WINNER (TAPESTRY/SCOTTISH OPERA)
2016 IRCPA “SONDRA RADVANOVSKY ENCOUNTER” –
ERMANNIO MAURO SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

As Harry Benn in *Suffragette* with Opera 5 –

“Tenor ringing, Tennekoon launches into Harry’s rolling aria, When rocked on the billows, that roughest of pillows, splashing the catchy tune over an altogether captivated audience with salty abandon.”

Ian Ritchie, *Opera Going Toronto*

BIOGRAPHY

Since moving to Toronto in the fall of 2014 Sri Lankan tenor Asitha Tennekoon has quickly established himself as a versatile singer and actor. Asitha won the Dora Award for Best Male Performance in Tapestry Opera’s *Rocking Horse Winner* capturing critical acclaim. Robert Harris of *The Globe and Mail* wrote “The surprise of the night was Asitha Tennekoon... his silky, emotional presence on stage – both vocally and dramatically – gave the show a powerful focus.” As **Gernando** in Haydn’s *L’Isola disabitata* in his debut with Voicebox: Opera in Concert, he was “possessed of luxurious lyricism and gentle italianate tone.... Clearly an artist on the fast track to stardom, a singer gifted with a brilliant, incandescent instrument and appealing stage manners.” (Ian Ritchie, *Opera Going Toronto*)

Asitha begins the 2017/18 season in ‘*A Song for All Seasons*’, a joint recital with soprano Erin Wall, in the Songmasters Recital Series, at the Royal Conservatory of Music. In 2018, Asitha makes his role and company debut as **Polidoro** in performances of Scarlatti’s *Ernani* with Opera Lafayette in Washington DC and New York City and joins the cast in the world premiere of *The Overcoat* (libretto by director Morris Panych, James Rolfe, composer) in a co-production with Tapestry Opera, Canadian Stage Company and Vancouver Opera.

Recent engagements for this sought-after tenor include **Marchese** in Glenn Gould School’s production of Puccini’s *La Ciccina*, and **Harry Ben** in Ethel Smyth’s *The Boatswain’s Mate* with Opera 5, leading Definitely the Opera to declare “if I had to pick a dramatic standout among the principals it would have to be Asitha Tennekoon, who has a gift for physical comedy rarely found among opera singers. His smooth tenor all the while never wavered.” Other opera credits in Canada include performances with Stratford Summer Music Festival, The Indian River Festival, MY Opera and Bicycle Opera Project.

As a concert soloist he has been praised as a “bright, nicely resonant tenor... with expression and sensitive phrasing” (Joseph So, *Musical Toronto*) and recently debuted as the tenor soloist in Mozart’s *Great Mass in C Minor* with the Tafelmusik Chamber Orchestra and Choir. His concert credits include performances with The Theatre of Early Music, Toronto Bach Festival, Toronto Classical Singers, London Pro Musica, and Village Voices. Frequently performed repertoire includes J.S. Bach’s *Johannes-Passione* (**Evangelist** and arias), the Monteverdi *Vespers*, Handel’s *Messiah*, and Mozart’s *Requiem*.

During his formative years in the USA Tennekoon was a featured soloist with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir, the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic Choir, the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, and the Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra.

Asitha studied Vocal Performance at the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University. In Toronto he completed the Artist Diploma Program at the Glenn Gould School at the Royal Conservatory of Music. He also holds Licentiate Diplomas in Voice and Piano from the Trinity College of Music, London, and the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, London.

SELECTED RESUME

OPERA

Don Ottavio *Don Giovanni* | Indiana University

Oronte Alcina | Glenn Gould School, Toronto

Tamino *Die Zauberflöte* | Stratford Summer Music Festival

Albert Herring *Albert Herring* | Indiana University

CONCERT

Messiah

Handel | Toronto Classical Singers

Requiem

Mozart | Columbus Indiana Philharmonic

St. John Passion

Bach | Talisker Players, Toronto

Christmas Oratorio

Bach | Indiana Symphony Orchestra



as **Paul** in *Rocking Horse Winner* with Tapestry Opera, Toronto (top) and as **Harry Ben** in *The Boatswain’s Mate* with Opera 5 (below)



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