



# GILES TOMKINS BASS-BARITONE

## REVIEWS

### **As Badger and Priest in *The Cunning Little Vixen* with Canadian Opera Company –**

"Bass-baritone Giles Tomkins sank his teeth firmly into *The Badger* as well as the Priest. As always, his singing was top-notch and really seemed to be having fun with the role."

**Greg Finney, Schopera**

### **As Colline in *La bohème* with Against the Grain Theatre –**

"His unforgettable and poignant farewell to his overcoat in Act IV will go down as one of the best I have heard live or on recording in decades. Sincere, irreverent, consummately musical at every step, he was the role, wearing his status on his sleeve for us all to see. It was ironic that so much could be said about a life without a regular meal through brazen and well-acted comedy."

**Stephan Bonfield, Ludwig van Toronto**

"Tomkins, a boundless source of impeccably timed stage antics, his singing full-bodied and seasoned..."

**Ian Ritchie, Opera Going Toronto**

### **As Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Manitoba Opera –**

"Canadian bass-baritone Giles Tomkins likewise brought dramatic intensity to his role as Don Basilio, Rosina's vocal tutor and ostensibly Bartolo's slimy sidekick. His performance of Act I's 'slander' aria, *La calunnia* with its famous long crescendo in which he advises Bartolo to smear Count Almaviva's name, was an early highlight."

**Holly Harris, Winnipeg Free Press**

"As Don Basilio, Giles Tomkins used his height and long legs to great comedic advantage, at times silly-walking around the stage while singing beautifully, portraying his character's dissemblance with fervour and glee."

**Neil Wiesensel, Schopera**

### **As Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Opera5 –**

"Bass-baritone Giles Tomkins, the veteran in the cast, brought experience and mellifluous tone to Basilio, including a nice 'La calunna'."

**Joseph So, Ludwig van Toronto**

"Giles Tomkins' Basilio kept threatening to steal the show with some classy singing and wickedly self-aware OTT acting."

**John Gilks, OperaRamblings**

### **As Timur in *Turandot* with Edmonton Opera –**

"Giles Tomkins sang the role of Liu's master, the aged Timur, and he made the most of the small part with a lustrous tone and an appropriately decrepit demeanour."

**Bill Rankin, Opera Canada**

"Edmonton Opera's *Turandot* is an exquisite tour de force that is a must see for opera lovers... a rich and absorbing portrayal of **Timur** by Giles Tomkins."

**Kevin Solez, Vue Weekly**

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## REVIEWS (CONTINUED)

### **As Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Edmonton Opera –**

"Bass - baritone Giles Tomkins making his Edmonton Opera debut, deserved every bit of the especially loud reception from the audience for his Raimondo..."

**Bill Rankin, Opera Canada**

"Strong support came from bass-baritone Giles Tomkins as Raimondo..."

**Mark Morris, Edmonton Journal**

### **As Angelotti in *Tosca* –**

"Giles Tomkins played a number of roles and was most effective as the escaped prisoner Angelotti looking ragged and hungry as he scurried about the stage looking for places to hide."

**Jim Murchison, The Charlebois Post**

"Comprimari are solid in all acts. Giles Tomkins is a suitably tormented Angelotti."

**Opera Going Toronto, [www.operagoto.com](http://www.operagoto.com)**

### **As Colline in *La Bohème* –**

"Bass-baritone Giles Tomkins crafted a convincing philosopher Colline, who particularly shone during his aria "Vecchia zimarra."

**Holly Harris, Winnipeg Free Press**

### **In *Don Giovanni* –**

"The arrival of the stone guest was as incisive as one could hope for ... effective, otherworldly and chilling—and well sung by Giles Tomkins."

**Harvey De Roo, [www.vanclassicalmusic.com](http://www.vanclassicalmusic.com)**

### **As Superintendent Budd in *Albert Herring* –**

"There are also 13 solo vocalists, and the casting, both vocally and theatrically, was exemplary ... bass-baritone Giles Tomkins was a sturdy and authoritative Superintendent Budd"

**Robert Jordan, Opera Canada**

### **As the Sergeant of Police in *The Pirates of Penzance* –**

"Giles Tomkins' portrait of the **Sergeant of Police** was a comic triumph...it was, altogether, an evening to make me regret all the years I have wasted not enjoying Gilbert and Sullivan."

**Bernard Jacobson, Seen and Heard International**

"Giles Tomkins handles his role as Sergeant of Police with glorious goofiness, combining with members of the Vancouver Opera Chorus with that ludicrously charming character song A Policeman's Lot Is Not a Happy One"

**John Jane, Review Vancouver**

### **As Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* –**

"Giles Tomkins' opportunistic Don Basilio (his account of 'La Calunnia' was first rate)... rounded out the accomplished cast very well. A sparkling production."

**Wayne Gooding, Opera Canada**

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## REVIEWS (CONTINUED)<sup>a</sup>

### **In Dublin Messiah with Aradia Ensemble –**

“Bass Baritone Giles Tomkins brought solemnity and reverence to his work on the 'The People That Walked in Darkness' and 'Thou Art Gone Up On High'. The authority and power he brought to the stunning piece, 'The Trumpet Shall Sound' was staggering. With trumpet playing of David Kjar underpinning both Tomkins singing and the orchestral scoring the effect was magisterial. Tomkins voice is rich with power but possessed of a softness that leaves it free of any harshness.”

**Brian Hay, NoRules-NoLights.com**

### **In Dublin Messiah with Symphony Nova Scotia –**

“Bass Giles Tomkins... has a strong, resonant voice... he sang brilliantly, fully in command of tone, phrasing and expression on ‘Why do the nations so furiously rage together’ and imparting a reverential hush to ‘Behold I tell you a mystery’ (Part III).”

**Stephen Pedersen, The Halifax Herald**

### **As Doctor Grenvil in La Traviata with Vancouver Opera –**

“Vancouver Opera’s La Traviata reminds you why a classic is a joy forever...the others in the vocal cast all do wonderful work, particularly Giles Tomkins as **Doctor Grenvil**.”

**Lloyd Dykk, The Georgia Straight**

### **As Brander in The Damnation of Faust –**

“The Damnation of Faust was nothing less than sensational in Vancouver...bass-baritone Giles Tomkins in the minor role of **Brander** was impressive.”

**Lloyd Dykk, The Georgia Straight**

### **As Marbuel in The Devil & Kate –**

“Giles Tomkins as the Devil’s assistant Marbuel is fulfilling his promise with a polished, commanding voice...as for diction, it was almost word perfect.”

**Paula Citron, Classical 96.3 FM**

### **In concert with Thirteen Strings –**

“Thirteen Strings delivers a jolly good time...Tomkins has a dark, full voice that suited the material well...Dover Beach had a lot going for it in Tuesday’s rendition, not the least of which was Tomkins’ assured singing.”

**Richard Todd, The Ottawa Citizen**

### **As Colline in La Boheme –**

“Giles Tomkins’ Colline received prolonged applause after his beautifully sung ‘Vecchia Zimarra’.”

**Dawn Martens, Opera Canada**

### **In King Arthur –**

“Music in this piece is mostly associated with magic and celebration, and the tiny orchestra (led by artistic director Larry Beckwith) performed Purcell’s score as if it were a festive catalogue of marvels ... Bass Giles Tomkins shivered effectively through the famous ice song, shadowed by a masked dancer who gradually thawed as the scene did ... Toronto Masque Theatre needs, and this production deserves, a co-producer with the resources to realize the exciting potential shown on Thursday. Stratford Festival, what are you waiting for?”

**Robert Everett-Green, The Globe & Mail**

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### **In James Rolfe's Inês –**

*"The strongest performer is bass-baritone Giles Tomkins who has a solid, rich voice and clear diction."*

**Michael Johnson, The Classical Music Network**

### **As Pistola in Falstaff –**

*"... a dazzling staging that combines earthy humour and a theatricality that buzzes so intensely that the three-plus hours sweep by in a flash ... Giles Tomkins is a bold but sycophantic Pistola ..."*

**Kenneth Walton, The Scotsman**

### **CD Review of "Purcell's Theatre Music Volume #1" –**

*"...under Kevin Mallon, the Toronto-based Aradia Ensemble play with verve and rhythmic imagination, while soprano Nicole Bower and bass Giles Tomkins are the pick of a personable bunch of young soloists. A Purcell bargain."*

**Richard Wigmore, The Daily Telegraph**

*"...a first class recording of highly charged and melody-rich music played with great style and originality by Mallon's forces... Giles Tomkins's expressive bass seems ideally suited to this repertoire for the words are always clear and amply endowed with meaning..."*

**Mark Sealey, Music Web International**

### **CD Review of Vivaldi's Griselda –**

*"...a rewarding performance ... Giles Tomkins's Gualtiero has riveting authority ..."*

**Nicholas Anderson, BBC Music Magazine**

*"Of the men Giles Tomkins as Gualtiero is expressively dramatic ... no one can deny that the aria Se ria procella (CD 1 tr. 4) is thrilling and he manages the extensive runs with assurance."*

**Göran Forsling, Music Web International**

### **As Don Basilio in Il Barbière di Siviglia –**

*"...we get true wit rather than tiresome gags... it is a very beautiful staging, that takes inspiration from the crumbling, pastel-coloured palacios of Havana...Giles Tomkins supplies louche, Lord Lucanesque presence as Don Basilio."*

**John Allison, The Sunday Telegraph**

### **As Don Alfonso in Così Fan Tutte –**

*"...Giles Tomkins was great as a young Don Alfonso. He never seemed evil the way an older Alfonso easily can... Conductor James Levine brought energy and expertise to the score...This Così is one that you should beg, borrow, or steal your way into tonight"*

**Jeffrey Johnson, The Hartford Courant**

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### CD Review of Beethoven's *An die Ferne Geliebte* –

*"...Tomkins' rich voice and careful phrasing make nice work of the Lieder (Beethoven's An die Ferne Geliebte)."*

**John Terauds, The Toronto Star**

*"Tomkins demonstrates an unfailing sensitivity to phrasing essential to the idiom ... he evinces a Fischer-Dieskau-like purity of tone ..."*

**Robert Franner, Opus Magazine**

### In concert with the Canadian Brass –

*"...a special treat was the voice of up and coming, handsome and debonair baritone, Giles Tomkins. He showed that he is equally at home singing either popular or classical music, by leading the audience in a Christmas favourites sing-along ... Performing "Jacob's Ladder" with back-up by the Elmer Iseler Singers, every note went "higher, higher" showcasing Tomkins' impressive vocal range. Tomkins' success on the international stage is almost guaranteed."*

**Anna Lisa Eyles, The Live Music Report**

### CD Review of "And So It Goes" –

*"...Tomkins employs a clear, reedy tone with characteristically impeccable diction... Billy Joel's title track (nicely introspective and an impressive late-measure change of register) reveals the promise of greatness to come. Yet, unquestionably, it's the Neapolitan warmth of the Donaudy (O Del Mio Amato Ben) that whets the appetite for more."*

**S. James Wegg, JWR Reviews**

### In Sokolovic's *The Midnight Court* –

*"Look forward to hearing more of Giles Tomkins, who has developed so appealingly as a young artist."*

**Peter Phoa, Opera Canada Magazine**

### As Somnus in Handel's *Semele* –

*"...a droll and clever vision that could grace any opera house... Baritone Giles Tomkins as Somnus was the sole stand-out..."*

**Paula Citron, Opera Canada Magazine**

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