

Benjamin Butterfield Tenor

Full Biography

Regarded as a "musically arresting presence" by the San Francisco Chronicle, Benjamin Butterfield is in demand for concert, opera and recital. His stage repertoire has encompassed roles in the Barber of Seville, Don Giovanni, Die Zauberflöte, Rake's Progress, Persephone, Cunning Little Vixen and Tamerlano with performances in Naples at Il Teatro di San Carlo, Theatre du Capitole in Toulouse, Welsh National Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, L'Opera Nationale de Montpellier, and Arizona Opera, as well as New York City Opera, L'Opera de Montreal, Vancouver Opera, Glimmerglass Opera Festival, and Canterbury Opera in New Zealand.



In concert he has appeared in Britten's War Requiem with the London Symphony Chorus and the State Orchestra of Thessaloniki, the St. Matthew Passion and St. John Passion with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra under Nicholas McGegan and Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln at the Toronto International Choral Festival. He has toured throughout Europe with Trevor Pinnock and the English Concert, the RIAS Kammerchor of Berlin and with Marc Minkowski and Les Musiciens du Louvre. Mr. Butterfield has also performed with the Symphony Orchestras of Detroit, San Francisco, New Jersey and Chicago. Other appearances have included the Saito Kinen Festival with Seiji Ozawa, Festival Vancouver performing the Mad Woman in Britten's Curlew River and in recital with Graham Johnson for VISI.

Mr. Butterfield's wide range of engagements for the 2007-2008 season include the Mozart Requiem with the Pacific Symphony and Handel's Messiah with the San Antonio, North Carolina and National Symphony. He will also appear with the Vancouver Symphony, Bethlehem Bach Festival and the Residentie Orkest in the Netherlands as well as in recitals for the Wyatt Artist in Residence at Mount Royal College, Calgary and in the Gulf Islands of B.C. featuring the music of Schumann, Ireland and Randy Newman.

The 2006-07 season highlights included a return engagement to the Houston Symphony singing Beethoven 9, and debuts with the Milwaukee Symphony and Colorado Symphony in Messiah. Ben reprised the role of Don Ottavio in Don Giovanni with Pacific Opera Victoria with performances in Victoria, as well as London, Ontario and also sang Britten's Serenade with I Musici of Montreal.

Highlights from Mr. Butterfield's previous seasons have included regular appearances at the Carmel Bach Festival in California with conductor Bruno Weil as well as performances of Messiah with the San Diego Symphony and the American Bach Soloists. Mr. Butterfield returned to Opera Ontario as Belmonte in Mozart's Die Entführung aus dem Serail, and he also performed the role of Tamino at the Calgary Opera in Mozart's Die Zauberflöte. Ben enjoys ongoing relationships with the Calgary Philharmonic, the Toronto Symphony, Les Violons du Roi and Tafelmusik. In France he debuted with L'Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg singing L'enfance du Christ, sang in Berlioz's Romeo and Juliet with the Toronto Symphony under Sir Andrew Davis, and performed Bach Cantatas at the BBC Proms with the Bach Choir of Bethlehem. Other orchestral engagements have included performances with the Oregon Symphony and the National Arts Center with Pinchas Zuckerman.

Of his many recordings, the Britten Serenade (CBC/Streatfeild) and Canticles (Marquis/ Aldeburgh Connection) have been recognized by the Canadian Juno Awards. He has also recorded Brahms and Schumann Liebeslieder (CBC/ Aldeburgh Connection), music of Bach, Schutz and Haydn (Koch International/ Thomas), Opera Encores (CBC/ Bradshaw), Psalm 80 of Roussel (Timpani/ Tovey) and Weinachts Oratorium (Dorion/ Funfgeld). Film and TV credits include Dido and Aeneas with the Mark Morris Dance Company and Tafelmusik, L'enfant et les sortileges with the Montreal Symphony and Charles Dutoit, Messiah for ZDF in Halle with the English Concert and Trevor Pinnock, and Bach's B minor Mass with the Bach Choir of Bethlehem for PBS. He is also heard regularly on CBC Radio.

Tenor

News, Reviews & Features

Acclaim

"Butterfield is not only a very accomplished recitalist, he is also a natural communicator... The Schumann cycle was particularly successful, with the contrasts in character between the songs well marked and the inner moods precisely rendered. ...the musical result was quite magical..."

Kenneth DeLong, Calgary Herald

"Benjamin Butterfield sang the tenor role with taste, authority and agility..."

Washington Post
Messiah with Paul Goodwin

"The solo quartet - Dominique Labelle, Jennifer Holloway, Benjamin Butterfield and Robert Gleadow - teamed well and sang with a ready expressiveness. Tenor Butterfield introduced an especially nice note of simplicity to his singing."

OC Register
Mozart Requiem with Carl St. Clair

"Benjamin Butterfield as the dutiful Don Ottavio, suitor to Donna Anna, brings a resolve to a role too often treated as a wimp's preserve."

James Reaney, The London Free Press

"Benjamin Butterfield is stunning as Ottavio, a signature role for him, and he performs his well-known show pieces to brilliant effect while also making an interesting foil for Donna Anna."

Grania Litwin, Victoria Times Colonist, April 21, 2007

"Tenor Benjamin Butterfield was the very image of handsome young prince as Tamino and sang with clarity throughout."

Arthur Kaptainis, The Gazette

"In the role of Tom Rakewell, Benjamin Butterfield gave an excellent performance that emphasized Tom's lovable and playful nature. His singing communicated the full range of Tom's emotions, from joy to boredom to despair, with wonderful lyricism..."

Ben D' Andrea, The Vancouver Courier

"Could there be a better Tom Rakewell than B.C.-born tenor Benjamin Butterfield, who portrays the central figure with affecting vocal grace and sensitivity to the character's mercurial mood swings?"

Douglas Hughes, The Georgia Straight

"Canadian tenor Benjamin Butterfield is a good actor, and throws himself into the part of Frederic, the slave of duty, with gusto."

D.T. Baker, Edmonton Journal

"As a secret member of the Leo Fall Society, your operetta-loving humble servant marvelled at the direct, open-throated, ungeschmalzified way in which Butterfield sang this so often sugar-coated music."

William Littler, The Toronto Star

"Tenor Benjamin Butterfield sang and played the heartsick schoolmaster so convincingly, I momentarily forgot I was in the theatre."

Alan Horgan, The Globe and Mail

"He [Butterfield] sang the narrative with the most honest, tender urgency, heralding a miracle with a true sense of awe. His arias were sweet-toned, long-lined and florid, with none of that oratorical "ha-ha-ha" aspiration to his syllables in his difficult number, Frohe Hirten."

Lloyd Dykk, Vancouver Sun

"It was simply ravishing. Butterfield's absolutely gorgeous voice and total musicality suddenly had the capacity audience awed into silence."

Hugh Fraser, Hamilton Spectator

"Benjamin Butterfield was first-rate, a musically arresting presence..."

Robert Commanday, San Francisco Chronicle