Božidar Smiljanić

Bass-Baritone

Born in Britain and now a member of the ensemble of Oper Frankfurt, bass-baritone Božidar Smiljanić scored a huge triumph in the title role in *The Marriage of Figaro* for English National Opera last season. In an acclaimed new production by Joe Hill-Gibbins, Božidar was described as “physically imposing but vocally agile” (*The Guardian*) whilst delivering “his tricky aria with aplomb” (*Sunday Times*).

In his first seasons in Frankfurt, Božidar has developed his repertoire considerably including debuts as Garibaldo in Claus Guth’s new production of *Rodelinda* opposite Andreas Scholl, Ariodate in *Xerxes* under Constantinos Carydis, and Eumée in a new production of Fauré’s *Pénélope* under Joana Mallwitz.This season, he sings his first Zoroastro in Ted Huffmann’s new production of *Orlando* conducted by Simone di Felice, and Borow in Christof Loy’s new production of Giordano’s *Fedora* conducted by Carlo Montanaro, alongside performances as Angelotti (*Tosca*) under Pier Giorgio Morandi, and Zuniga in Barrie Kosky’s *Carmen* under Giedrė Šlekytė.

A regular on the concert platform, Božidar makes his debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor Dalia Stasevka this season in Bartók’s *Cantata Profana* and continues to develop strong relationships with a number of key conductors and orchestras. Recent highlights include Bach’s Mass in B minor with Nathalie Stutzmann and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Walton’s *Belshazzar’s Feast* with John Wilson and Brander in Berlioz’s *La damnation de Faust* with Ed Gardner, both with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Masetto (*Don Giovanni*) with Jakub Hrůša and the Bamberger Symphoniker in Bamberg and at Hamburg’s Elbphilharmonie, and Handel’s *Messiah* with Hervé Niquet and Le Concert Spirituel, Trevor Pinnock and Das Neue Orchester Köln, and Richard Cooke and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at London’s Royal Albert Hall. With a particularly extensive concert repertoire, Božidar’s further performances include Elgar’s Dream of Gerontius, Dvořák’s Stabat Mater, Fauré’s Requiem, and Beethoven’s Symphony No.9, as well as a large number of Bach’s cantatas which he performed under Masaaki Suzuki on tour in the UK, USA and Germany whilst still a student.

Božidar made his professional debut at the 2014 Glyndebourne Festival, and has since appeared with a number of the major UK companies, including Scottish Opera (Schaunard in *La bohème*), Garsington Opera (Haly in *L’italiana in Algeri*), and Glyndebourne on Tour (Masetto), before joining English National Opera as a Harewood Artist in the 2018/19 season.

During his studies at the Royal Academy of Music, Božidar amassed a variety of operatic roles and was particularly singled out as Nick Shadow (*The Rake’s Progress*), with *Opera* describing his performance as “charismatic and velvet-voiced, simmering with subtle menace beneath his bonhomie and roaring magnificently in defeat”. Further roles include Monterone (*Rigoletto*), Le Roi (*Cendrillon*)*,* Superintendent Budd (*Albert Herring*), Betto (*Gianni Schicchi*), The Mayor in Rimsky-Korsakov’s *May Night* and Luka in Walton’s *The Bear*.

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