Lawrence Zazzo

Countertenor

In a career that has taken American countertenor Lawrence Zazzo to many of the world’s leading opera houses and festivals, his mastery of coloratura and uniquely nuanced characterisations remain the hallmarks of his ongoing success.  Last season saw debuts at Teatro alla Scala in Laurent Pelly’s new production of Gassmann’s *L’Opera Seria* under Christophe Rousset and as Rinaldo at Händel-Festspiele Karlsruhe under Rinaldo Alessandrini.  This season he returns to Oper Frankfurt as Tolomeo (*Giulio Cesare)* conducted by Laurence Cummings and to Händel-Festspiele Karlsruhe for a revival of *Rinaldo.*

Lawrence Zazzo made his operatic debut as Oberon in Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* while still at London’s Royal College of Music and has since performed the role extensively to great acclaim, including at Canadian Opera Company, Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, Staatsoper Hamburg, Scottish Opera and most recently Wiener Staatsoper in Irina Brook’s staging.  Highlights of an illustrious career include Disinganno in Robert Carsen’s production of *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno*at the Salzburg Whitsun and Summer festivals alongside Cecilia Bartoli and conductor Gianluca Capuano, Farnace *(Mitridate, re di Ponto)* for Bayerische Staatsoper, Tolomeo (*Giulio Cesare)*at the Metropolitan Opera, Ottone (*Agrippina*) at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Goffredo (*Rinaldo*) for Staatsoper Berlin and Opernhaus Zürich, and Ottone (*L’incoronazione di Poppea*) at Theater an der Wien, La Monnaie and Bayerische Staatsoper. In the title role of *Giulio Cesare*, Zazzo has appeared at Oper Frankfurt in Nadja Loschky’s recent new production, as well as at Opéra national de Paris, La Monnaie, English National Opera and Semperoper Dresden.  As *Radamisto* he has appeared at English National Opera, *Orlando*at Welsh National Opera, *Solomon* at Royal Ballet & Opera, *Tamerlano* in R.B Schlather’s innovative production at Oper Frankfurt’s Bockenheimer Depot, and as Orfeo (*Orfeo ed Euridice*) with Canadian Opera Company, Den Norske Opera, and New National Theatre Tokyo, recently released on OperaVision.

With a strong affinity for contemporary repertoire, Zazzo has created several characters including Mascha in Peter Eötvös’ *Tri Sestri*, the Refugee in Jonathan Dove’s *Flight* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, and Trinculo in Thomas Ades’s *The Tempest* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. He gave the world premiere of Dove’s *Hojoki* with BBC Symphony Orchestra under the late Jiří Bělohlávek and created the role of Odysseus in the world premiere of Rolf Riehm’s *Sirenen* for Oper Frankfurt conducted by Martyn Brabbins. Zazzo gave the premiere performance of *Paradise Lost*, a monodrama recently written for him by Geoff Page, to unanimous critical acclaim.

Admired for his curation of imaginative and thematic programming, the most recent addition to Zazzo’s impressive recording catalogue is *Weeping Philosophers*, which explores depictions of philosophers in Baroque music, released on the Pan Classics label in 2024. Other discs in his extensive discography include *Handel Uncaged*, a cycle of cantatas for alto voice and trio (Inventa), *Baroque Gender Stories*, with Lautten Compagney and Wolfgang Katschner (Deutsche harmonia mundi), *A Royal Trio*, featuring works by Ariosti, Bononcinci and Handel with La nuova musica and David Bates (harmonia mundi USA) as well as Mozart’s *Apollo et Hyacinthus* and *Mitridate, re di Ponto*, both with Classical Opera and Ian Page (Linn Records), and the title role in *Giulio Cesare* with Le Concert d’Astrée and Emanuelle Haïm (Virgin Classics).

Away from the stage, Lawrence Zazzo is Senior Lecturer in Music at the International Centre for Music Studies at Newcastle University’s School of Arts and Cultures.