

Marie Te Hapuku, soprano

As Aida

"Excels as the slave Aida, not only with her strong, beautiful voice, but also with her ability to capture the conflict Aida feels between loving Radames and loving her father and her homeland." *Deseret News*

"Masterfully sung. From previous performances, [she] has been described as 'the perfect Verdi heroine, richly musical and emotionally touching' . . . [She] proves to UFOC audiences to be that and more." *Utah Statesman*

"Verdi wrote some of his most moving, exotic music for 'Aida,' and [she] sings it with beautiful tone colors throughout her wide vocal range and high-voltage emotion." *Salt Lake Tribune*

As Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*

"A splendid Donna Elvira: well in command of the technical challenges, possessed of a rich voice with just a hint of steel behind it, and blessed by a personality that communicates effortlessly across the footlights."

Opera~Opera Magazine (AUSTRALIA)

"Donna Elvira displayed a thoughtful and sinuous voice and her enthusiastic acting gave the role a delicious sensuality." *National Business Review (NZ)*

"Donna Elvira sang her achingly beautiful arias with glorious command and conviction." *Manawatu Standard*

"Creates a lusty, busty heroine out of Donna Elvira, and is a whirlwind on stage." *New Zealand Herald*

"Vocally secure and entirely believable." *Dominion Post (NZ)*

As Lina in *Stiffelio*

"Lustrous, full voice tones on a column of unbroken air. Her 'O, most clement God' showed her talent to develop an extraordinary full range of color. . . . Together, [Lina and Stiffelio] were palpably dynamic in their confrontations. Their voices blended beautifully and their attacks were precise and exhilarating." *Venice Gondolier Sun*

"A large, well-focused soprano that could be heard with excellent clarity in even the most frantic numbers. Lina's prayer for forgiveness, 'A te ascenda o Dio clemente,' was touchingly delicate. She has the sort of voice that the orchestra loves, fitting into its texture with an easy warmth. The Stiffelio-Lina duet in Act III was profound, as she appealed to him to hear her not as her husband but as her minister." *Opera News*

"What really matters is the singing, and we were given great stretches of superlative vocalism, primarily in the taxing soprano role of Lina, the adulterous but loving wife. As the cuckolded minister Stiffelio, Todd Geer brought his rich tenor and musical intelligence to a complex role, matching [Lina's] ringing note for ringing note in their duets, and responding to her lustrous, dramatic intensity in their emotional confrontations." *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*

"Sings the role of [Stiffelio's] wife, Lina, with imperious feminine charm." *Pelican Press*

"A fine showing in a difficult role. The soprano's bright and flexible voice handled the coloratura with agility and brought a sensitively shaded rendering of Lina's prayer to her dead mother, 'Ah! dagli scanni eterei'." *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*

"Especially commanding as Lina, possessing a rich soprano voice that actually matched in power the rousing strains of the Sarasota Opera Orchestra." *SCENE magazine*

As Léonore in *Il trovatore (Le Trouvère)*

"The glorious soprano voice of Leonore fulfilled all the demands of the gorgeous arias. . . . [her] vocal beauty reached its peak in the fourth-act aria 'D'amor sull'ali rosee' as Leonore plans to save Manrique. The round purity of her tone as she reached the D above high C was ravishing." *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*

"Showed an excellent sense of style, a well-schooled voice of wide range and even scale." *Pro Opera Revista (MEXICO)*

"A very promising young dramatic soprano, one who can carry the long span of Verdi's phrases, and ride the crests of his phrase peaks with authority. Her tone is rich and colourful, if not outright opulent, and she made an excellent effect with Leonore's two great arias. She capped the ensembles with generous, ringing top notes and, further, is a grand, stately presence on the stage." *Opera~Opera Magazine (AUSTRALIA)*

"The standout. Looking like a young, less starchy Joan Sutherland, the New Zealand-born soprano displayed a lovely lyric-dramatic voice . . . with limpid tone and offered natural, understated acting." *Opera News*

"Here, as through the entire production, her sympathetic interpretation gives flesh and blood to a character often seen as little more than an onslaught of notes." *Pelican Press*

"Especially delightful was the New Zealand soprano. . . Her Leonore was lyrical, her voice smooth and elegant throughout wide-ranging arias." *St. Petersburg Times*

As Abigaille in Nabucco

"Abigaille leads them all with her powerful vocal presence. Her clear, strong, rich voice is - by itself - worth the price of the ticket. Wisely, she is surrounded by a cast that can keep up with - but not rival - her vocally...." *Deseret News*

"Abigaille is the warrior princess with a giant chip on her shoulder. Her acting skills, vocal acrobatics and musical intensity made for a standout performance." *Salt Lake Tribune*

"The leading soprano part in this opera demands a singer of extraordinary ability. Their choice was the New Zealand born soprano. Having begun her career as a mezzo, she had well-developed low notes, but it was her beautiful high extension which led her to become a dramatic soprano. As Abigaille, she had a commanding presence on stage and her sizable voice had a good variety of color which enabled her to handle both the visual and vocal demands of the role." *Opera Japonica*

"Abigaille soared through the many high C's with glorious brilliance and raged downward to the low A's with vocal fervor." *Logan Herald-Journal*

As Fiordiligi in Così fan tutte

"Performed admirably as Fiordiligi, both vocally and dramatically." *Opera News*

"A majestic soprano voice." *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*

"Handles the leaps, bounds and coloratura with beauty and agility." *Longboat Observer*

"A brilliant soprano, especially effective as Fiordiligi in her beautiful but oh-so-earnest arias." *Times Argus*

As Liù in Turandot

"Gave the role of the slave girl Liù a combination of sweetness, vulnerability and strength. Her first act aria, 'Signore ascolta,' was magical - a pleading cry for mercy sung with gorgeous, polished tone and impeccable phrasing." *Salt Lake Tribune*

"A beautiful soprano. Her voice exudes a vibrancy and warmth that give her singing depth and definition. One of her finest moments was in the aria 'Signore, ascolta!' from Act I." *Deseret News*

In Verdi's Requiem

"Possesses a striking voice - unified in its pleasing color, capable of tremendous range, strong enough to easily soar over the combined sonic mass of the orchestra and chorus, and used with acute intelligence. Her blend with the other soloists was admirable, and her sense of the dramatic in her solos was unerring." *The Post-Standard*

"Delivered jaw-dropping vocalizations. This soprano never fails to dazzle her listeners. Her rock-solid technique became mere tools as she focused on pure musical delivery." *Salt Lake Tribune*

"More than up to matching the power of the choral and orchestral energy." *Knoxville News Sentinel*

Other

"She was the perfect Verdi heroine, richly musical and emotionally touching." *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*

"A voice that is pure, elegant and musical." *Sunday Star Times (NZ)*

"Her voice is as full at the top as at the bottom, and there is no strain." *Evening Post (NZ)*

"An animated, engaging presence on stage." Solo Recital, *Deseret News*

"A silk-smooth vocalization which amply filled the venue with a sound and intonation wanting for nothing." *Salt Lake Tribune*

"An amazing dynamic range - going to a pianissimo on a high note - which she effectively used to shape each phrase and accentuate the mood of the aria." Met Winners Concert, *Deseret News*

"This is a Rolls-Royce voice." *NZ Opera News*