

# JOHN UPPERTON

# DRAMATIC TENOR

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**Vocal history:** Now firmly established in the Heldentenor repertoire, including all major Wagnerian roles except so far, Parsifal. John has retained the flexibility as well as the ease and resilience in the upper register from his earlier high lyric and *bel canto* roles.

**Musical education includes:**

University of Liverpool BA (Hons) in Music  
Royal College of Music (postgraduate singing course)  
LGSM pianoforte teachers' diploma (external)

**Singing teacher:** David Pollard

**Languages:** English, French, Italian, German, Czech, Greek, Russian, Spanish

**Roles include:**

Norsk Opera and Ballet	Siegfried	<i>Götterdämmerung</i>	James Duddle
Royal Opera House	Dom Antonio Gherardo	<i>Dom Sébastien</i> <i>Gianni Schicchi</i>	Mark Elder Antonio Pappano
English National Opera	Herodes Walter Radames Gregor Hermann	<i>Salome</i> <i>The Passenger</i> <i>Aïda</i> <i>Věc Makropulos</i> <i>The Queen of Spades</i>	Kwamé Ryan Sir Richard Armstrong Keri-Lynn Wilson Sir Richard Armstrong Edward Gardner
Midsummer Opera	Tristan Tannhäuser Cavaradossi Enzo Chénier Siegmond Don Carlo Otello Dick Johnson	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> <i>Tannhäuser</i> <i>Tosca</i> <i>La Gioconda</i> <i>Andrea Chénier</i> <i>Die Walküre</i> <i>Don Carlo</i> <i>Otello</i> <i>La Fanciulla del West</i>	Richard Black Nicholas Bosworth David Roblou David Roblou David Roblou David Roblou David Roblou David Roblou David Roblou
Gafa Arts	Mime	<i>Das Rheingold/Siegfried</i>	Stephen Anthony Brown
Opera at Home	Apollo	<i>Daphne</i>	José Gandia
Grimeborn	Harry Benn	<i>The Boatswain's Mate</i>	John Warner
University of Nottingham	Harry Collins	<i>Take Care</i>	Jonathan Tillbrook
Purcell Room	Janáček	<i>Zápisník Zmizelého</i>	Piano: Joan Taylor

## Some reviews:

### **Wagner *Tristan und Isolde*** (Midsummer Opera)

“John Upperton sang Tristan’s taxing role with a powerful sense of drama and a glowing richness which brought out the baritone qualities in his voice, responding to Lisa Stonham’s tender cor anglais as though they were singing in duet.” (Katie Barnes, Wagner News)

### **Wagner *Siegfried*** (Gafa Arts)

“John Upperton’s Mime... ably compensated for the lack of subtitles with excellent diction and the guileful delivery of [a] practised Wagnerian... [his] University Challenge exchange of wits [with the Wanderer] supplied the highlight of the First Act.” (Peter Quantrell, The Arts Desk)

### **Wagner *Siegfried*** (Gafa Arts)

“John Upperton, who must be one of the most versatile tenors on the planet (the day after *Rheingold*, I heard him sing Verdi and Dvořák with equal aplomb), was a most winning Mime who resembled a mournful bloodhound that just knew that it was going to be kicked. In *Siegfried* it was revelatory to hear the role sung by a voice of Heldentenor capability, and he articulated each word exquisitely. Act I became a duel between two Heldentenors. Most Mimes are hyperactive, but Upperton made the character’s conflict almost entirely internal, with his stillness and concentration contrasting with Siegfried’s flamboyance. That sense of control made his final scene, when Mime unwittingly kicks over all the traces, all the more striking and delicious.” (Katie Barnes, Wagner News)

### **Wagner *Tannhäuser*** (Midsummer Opera)

“John Upperton, pitched instantly into title role’s most demanding music, gave the Rome Narrative wonderful, full-bodied tone and immense dramatic urgency which made me quite forget that I had heard the music before. His fining down his the voice into a thread for *Heilige Elisabeth* was masterfully done.” (Katie Barnes, Wagner News)

### **Puccini *Tosca*** (Midsummer Opera)

“Tonight’s *Tosca* should perhaps have been titled *Cavaradossi* ... And in his big moment - the aria ‘E lucevan le stelle’ in which he contemplates life in light of his imminent death - Upperton makes us believe that for him, singing is as natural as talking.” (Francesca Wickers)

### **Donizetti *Dom Sébastien*** (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden)

“Amongst the smaller roles John Upperton (Dom Antonio) caught my ear. with absolutely clear diction.” (Serena Fenwick, Musical Pointers)

### **Ponchielli *La Gioconda*** (Midsummer Opera)

“John Upperton, powerful but lean of voice brought a buccaneering edge to Enzo and deserves special credit for opening ‘Cielo e mar’ his big tenor moment, as a gentle rhapsody.” (Yehuda Shapiro, Opera)

### **Giordano *Andrea Chénier*** (Midsummer Opera)

“...John Upperton’s singing as Chénier was on a heroic scale with a full ringing tone.” (Katie Barnes, Music Club London, Harmony Magazine)

### **Verdi *Otello*** (Midsummer Opera)

“John Upperton has the ideal tenor for *Otello*, with lyrical sound that is pure, powerful, and ringing: spot-on pitches; no forcing, shouting or screaming; intelligible, communicative command of Italian. Verdi would have admired him mightily.” (Andrew Porter, Opera)

### **Verdi *Macbeth*** (Midsummer Opera)

“John Upperton naturally took the place apart with Macduff’s single aria and made much of the character.” (Katie Barnes, Music Club London, Harmony Magazine)

### **Janáček *Zápisník Zmizelého*** (Beckenham Festival)

“In strong and unflagging voice he gave a stunning performance, combining impeccable Czech and the full variety of Janáček’s declamation without sacrificing any of his searing lyricism.” (Terry Heard, Dvořák Society Journal)