

GARRETT KEAST – OPERA PRESS

KLASSIK BEGEISTERT, Sebastian Koik

***Don Quixote* – Staatsoper Hamburg, January 2018**

“Heavenly beautiful, the orchestra plays the ingenious dream music. Consistently, the orchestra plays under the American Garrett Keast, the music of the great composer Ludwig Minkus wonderfully lively and energetic, with a good sense of drama. The Spanish dances are as beautiful as the wonderfully swinging waltzes.”

KLASSIK BEGEISTERT, Sebastian Koik

***The Nutcracker* – John Neumeier, Staatsoper Hamburg, January 2018**

“This evening, it was the Symphony Orchestra’s turn. And the music became another major highlight of the evening! Presenting himself with a perfect performance, Garrett Keast led the Hamburg Symphony Orchestra in a relentlessly good performance. The orchestra’s playing was sparkling and fresh, with an extremely beautiful sound. Tchaikovsky’s great composition was made to shine. There was nothing to complain about, even for the most demanding listeners! Musically, this was a great pleasure. Among other works, the Berlin-based American conductor Garrett Keast had already led a sensational *Othello* in Hamburg, musically perhaps the most impressive Neumeier piece. In January, he returns to conduct the Opera’s resident orchestra, the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra, in the ballet *Don Quixote*. May he conduct many more evenings in Hamburg!”

INCIDENT LIGHT

***Carmen* – Opera San Antonio, October 2016**

“Houston-born conductor Garrett Keast and the San Antonio Symphony provided responsive, vibrantly played accompaniment.”

SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS

***Carmen* – Opera San Antonio, October 2016**

“The main strengths of the staging were the exceptionally strong core singing cast that combined with splendid orchestral support from the San Antonio Symphony in the pit...”

THE ASPEN TIMES - “Fresh, youthful *La Bohème* scores big points”

***La Bohème* – Aspen Music Festival, 2016**

“Conductor Garrett Keast clearly knows his way around this score, bringing out the pulse and musical shapes with an ear for both the singers and the drama.”

OPERA NEWS

***La Bohème* – Aspen Music Festival, Marc Shulgold, 2016**

“Garrett Keast led an exuberant pit orchestra... never let the pace sag and always stayed in sync with his singers.”

WIENER ZEITUNG

***Shakespeare Dances* – Theater an der Wien, 2016**

“Pure Drama is conveyed by the Vienna Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Garrett Keast”

FABIUSKULTURSHOCKBLOG

***Cosi fan tutte* – Syrian Refugee Tour, Theaterhaus Stuttgart, 2014**

“In keeping with the concept and the cast of singers, conductor Garrett Keast also cultivates a modern Mozart style, emphasizing agogics and transparency. The orchestra, made up of musicians of the Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester from Mannheim and the Stuttgarter Symphoniker, follows him with a warm and flexible sound and is invariably an attentive partner for the singers.”

ECHO NEWS

***Cosi fan tutte* – Syrian Refugee Tour, 2014**

"The strings of the Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester Mannheim and the winds of the Stuttgarter Symphoniker accompanied all this - only slightly below stage level and thus fully visible - with brilliance and spirit, well differentiated and playing with unbroken vitality. Conductor Garrett Keast has a feeling for Mozart's delicate score, for its dramatically insistent and its lyrical elements.”

DALLAS MORNING NEWS, Scott Cantrell

***Cosi fan tutte* – Fort Worth Opera Festival, 2014**

“A dazzling *Cosi fan tutte* at the Fort Worth Opera Festival.” “Smartly led by Garrett Keast, members of the Fort Worth Symphony match the singers’ expressive range and dramatic specificity; some of the quieter wind playing is exquisite. [...], Keast deserves much credit for the amazing tautness of the vocal ensembles.”

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

***Cosi fan tutte* – Fort Worth Opera Festival, 2014**

“That it was going to be a good night was evident when the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, with Garrett Keast conducting, plunged into the overture. This was sparkling, well-played music, and it set an atmosphere that was going to continue when the consistently excellent cast of singer-actors came onstage.”

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

***Cosi fan tutte* – Fort Worth Opera Festival, 2014**

“The sense of success was heightened by the superb playing of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra under Garrett Keast’s capable leadership.”

DIGINEWS, TERRY PONICK

***Ariadne auf Naxos* – Virginia Opera, 2014**

"Conductor Garrett Keast, in his company debut, kept things light and lively and always together, never easy in an opera that wants to feel like it’s a bit out of control. Under his baton, the orchestra performed convincingly and well."

METROPOLITAN ARTS REVIEWS

***Ariadne auf Naxos* – Virginia Opera, 2014**

Maestro Garrett Keast kept the singers and the orchestra in tempo together. He also was able to be fully aware of the singer’s entrances and able to direct them, while still be fully cognizant of the orchestral tapestry supporting the vocal parts. Both the orchestral nuances and the vocal phrasing in the second half of the opera where they simultaneously perform tragic opera and buffa opera was done very creatively.

ARTSONG UPDATE

***Ariadne auf Naxos* – Virginia Opera, 2014**

“Under the baton of Garrett Keast, the orchestra of Virginia Symphony players brought out all the power and sweep and Romantic passion of Strauss’s music.”

BLEATMAG

***Faust* – Opera National de Paris, 2011**

“An almost perfect orchestra under the young conductor Garrett Keast.”

FINANCIAL TIMES, SHIRLEY APTHORP

***Bluthaus* – Georg Friedrich Haas, Oper Bonn, 2011**

"Garrett Keast draws refined and concentrated playing from the SWR Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra and shapes Haas’s score with assured sensitivity.”

OPERNNETZ, MICHAEL S. ZERBAN

***Bluthaus* – Georg Friedrich Haas, Oper Bonn, 2011**

"Garrett Keast took over the musical direction... [for the Oper Bonn premiere], and he did it with bravura. He led the SWR Radio Symphony Orchestra in a very concentrated and precise way, accompanying the singers through the highly sophisticated passages of Haas's compositional art. He goes beyond just music and the art of singing; he tries to create an atmosphere and to evoke feelings in the listener. Keast succeeds in this so well with the orchestra in the pit and the actors on the stage, that even doubters about New Music would have to capitulate."

AUSTIN AMERICAN – STATESMAN, DAVID MEAD

***Hansel and Gretel* - Butler Opera Center, 2008**

"Garrett Keast, conducting his third production at UT and a kind of principal guest conductor, draws a rich, full tone from the orchestra. Particularly on Friday evening, he was able to pull back into line players and singers who fell victim to opening night jitters."

OPERA NEWS, GEORGE DANSKER

***Don Giovanni* – New Orleans Opera, 2009**

“...he clearly understood Mozart style and drew very good playing from the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra.”

ST. BERNARD VOICE, CHRISTINA VELLA

***Don Giovanni* – New Orleans Opera, November 2008**

"Conductor Garrett Keast did a remarkable job with the large, difficult production, with its cast of seven principals and a complex score. The orchestra was unusually polished and vivid; one can only attribute this, and the rest of the musical pleasures, to Conductor Keast."

TIMES-PICAYUNE

***Don Giovanni* – New Orleans Opera, 2008**

"Making his local debut in the pit, conductor Garrett Keast led the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra with energy, realizing the dynamics of the score nicely. The balance between the singers and the orchestra, not always easy to maintain with Mozart, was well attended to throughout the night.”

TOWN-CRIER NEWS

***Norma* – South Florida Opera Company, 2007**

"Garrett Keast, one of America's brightest young conductors, was the musical director of the production. He melded an exceptional group of musicians together into a marvelous orchestra. He took control during the overture, clearly demonstrating both his own and the orchestra's extraordinary talents."

PALM BEACH POST

***Norma* – South Florida Opera Company, 2007**

"In this second of two performances (*Norma* opened Wednesday), the turnaround began with the pitcher - in this case, guest conductor Garrett Keast. The buzz he created with the orchestra traveled throughout the auditorium. Keast especially set the course for the cast's three main guest stars. The company gave a spirited and well-groomed performance."

AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN, DAVID MEAD

***Dialogues of the Carmelites* – Butler Opera Center, April 2006**

"This production's artistic center of gravity was conductor Garrett Keast, demonstrating Friday evening how a conductor's strong technique and right artistic sense draws the constituent efforts into focus, making the best use of what is right and minimizing what is not. He got artistically superb, if not flawless, playing from the orchestra."

THE AUSTIN CHRONICLE, AUSTIN CRITICS TABLE

***Dialogues of the Carmelites* – Butler Opera Center, April 2006**

Under Garrett Keast's direction, the Butler Opera Center production of *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, was crowned "Best Opera Performance" for the 2005-2006 Austin season.

TOWN-CRIER NEWS, FLORIDA

***Madama Butterfly* – South Florida Opera Company, 2003**

"The fully-staged opera [was] performed by a professional cast and...chamber orchestra under the direction of talented conductor Garrett Keast... The music is beautiful and the performances are magnificent."

OPERA NEWS, DAVID SHENGOLD

***Boccaccio* – The Bronx Opera, 2002**

"The most impressive element of the production was Garrett Keast and Elaine Smith Purcell's well-prepared chorus."