

Kevin MALLON

Conductor & Composer

REVIEWS

“Irish conductor Kevin Mallon gave us a lean and aerobic performance of the Dublin version of Handel’s Messiah with Symphony Nova Scotia, soloists and the Symphony Nova Scotia Chorus... The Christmas classic has never sounded more energetic, lively and precise. The audience response to the familiar yet strangely uncustomary music has never been more enthusiastic.”

Dublin Messiah / Aradia Ensemble / Stephen Pedersen, The Halifax Herald

Nominated for Irish Times Theatre Awards 2009

Verdi - Un ballo in maschera at the Cork Opera House - September 2008

Opera 2005/ Kevin Mallon

“Three performances were given in Cork’s recently refurbished OPERA HOUSE, followed by one in Limerick. The company’s Belfast-born artistic director, Kevin Mallon, was in the pit, and on the opening night (September 23) he demonstrated a real feeling for the powerful lines of Verdi’s sombre creation, drawing excellent playing from his orchestra.”

Ian Fox, Opera Magazine, February 2009

Handel: Israel in Egypt Aradia Ensemble/Kevin Mallon

Naxos 8.560966-67

“Toronto-based Belfast conductor Kevin Mallon directs an agreeably robust and musicianly performance. The musical characterisation is light. Mallon enjoys but doesn’t overdo Handel’s depiction of frogs and flies. And the choral singing is thoroughly dependable.”

Michael Dervin, Irish Times, Friday, January 9, 2009

Mallon Hailed as “Canada’s Crown Prince of Period Performance”

“Kevin Mallon is establishing himself very quickly as Canada’s crown prince of period performance. Not that we should forget his Irish roots or his work with the Cork Opera or even the fact that frequently he is invited to guest-conduct standard repertoire and contemporary music. It is, however, the music of the Baroque that Mr. Mallon delivers to our eager ears with great aplomb. Aradia Ensemble is a wonderful grouping of very talented musicians and Mallon’s recent artistic appointment as the director of Grand River Baroque Festival in Ayr, Ontario bodes well for a continuation of this trend. This recording of Handel’s oratorio, second in the minds of the admirers only to Messiah, is a good example of how carefully and sensitively these musicians handle the score. Moreover, the cast of mostly very young soloists provides a uniformly excellent vocal tone, with all of them performing this well known, well loved oratorio with enthusiasm and talent. Though considered a failure in Handel’s times, Israel in Egypt also delivers stirring and beautiful music, set to some of the most dramatic biblical episodes. As is, it is a great showcase for Aradia’s and Kevin Mallon’s abilities.”

Robert Tomas, The Toronto Wholenote Magazine July, 2008

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REVIEWS (continued)

Vivaldi, A.: Sacred Music, Vol. 3

Aradia Ensemble

Naxos: 8.570445

"In the plethora of Vivaldi's sacred music, there are no losers. The man was simply incapable of writing anything that was not at least lovely. So it's good to have this third disc of the complete sacred works. Kevin Mallon—like Vivaldi, in a way—is unable to produce anything that is not lovely. Moreover, at a generous 74 minutes, this is a real value—and what sound!"

Review by Giv Cornfield, The New Recordings, cliffsclassics.com, October 22, 2008

Nominated for Juno Award in Large Ensemble Category

Haydn Symphonies 62, 107, 108

Toronto Chamber Orchestra/ Kevin Mallon

Naxos: 8.572130

ClassicsToday rating 8/8

"Kevin Mallon sets ideal tempos, lets the winds color the music tellingly, and gets his players to give him precision without stiffness."

Review by David Hurwitz, Classics Today, November 2008

"Kevin Mallon's Aradia Ensemble executes these pieces as well as we can imagine, and the sound places us in an ideal listening perspective. If you like Handel and you don't know these pieces, don't hesitate."

Boyce: Symphonies / Naxos CD / Classics Today

"Kevin Mallon and his excellent Canadian group, the Aradia Ensemble, give clear readings of two of the most popular choral works of the French baroque composer. This period performance of the Te Deum is very different from the one used to introduce Eurovision programmes - altogether lighter and more joyful, with an exuberant display of timpani at the start and bright trumpet flourishes throughout. In the Midnight Mass, Mallon equally brings out the joy of the writing, giving more prominence than usual to the carols that punctuate the Kyrie. The Dixit Dominus, with its unexpectedly gentle, minor key introduction, makes an attractive extra item."

Charpentier: Messe de Minuit pour Noel / Naxos CD / The Guardian

"The Canadian vocal and instrumental Aradia Ensemble, under its director Kevin Mallon, performs stylishly and with sensibility."

Charpentier: Noël's and Christmas Motets / Naxos CD / Classic fM

"With Mallon in charge, the music exudes a freshness that is a welcome surprise and that further commends these poised and erudite readings. Vigour, affection, and commitment abound here, and the music-lover unfamiliar with Cimarosa's music should take the first opportunity to pounce on this release!"

Cimarosa: Overtures, Volume 2 / Naxos CD / Fanfare

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REVIEWS (continued)

“...the Aradia Ensemble offer us infectious enthusiasm, youth and charm. What more could we ask for.”

Handel: Water Music, Music for the Royal Fireworks / Naxos CD / MusicWeb International

“Can the market bear another Water Music? Sure, if it’s as exhilarating as this budget-price version by Irish musician Kevin Mallon, a pupil of John Eliot Gardiner, and the Aradia Ensemble. That famous air is certainly as ‘presto’ as it is marked, those dances bouncy enough to get Darren Gough on his feet. Handel’s other best-known work, the Royal Fireworks music, is recorded for the first time with a transverse flute, as specified in the original score, heard to especially poignant effect in ‘La Paix’.”

Handel: Water Music, Music for the Royal Fireworks / Naxos CD / The Observer

“...an enjoyable performance, conducted without artifice and mannerism by Kevin Mallon (whose lightly sprung, unselfconscious way with the music may prove the set's most bankable selling point).”

Rinaldo / Naxos CD / Opera

“Mallon and his Toronto troops do this one proud, giving a wonderfully vivacious, flavourful performance. The Adagio is taken rather rapidly-not quite an Andante-but it works very well at this tempo.”

Haydn: Symphonies, Vol. 31 / Naxos CD / Fanfare

“...a thoroughly enjoyable release.”

Lully: Ballet Music for the Sun King / Naxos CD / Gramophone

“The orchestral sounds from the pit under Kevin Mallon are from an entirely different world. The instruments are modern, but the expressive world, the textures and the balances, are driven by the concerns of period performance practice. The sound is light, clean, transparent...”

Don Giovanni / Cork Opera 2005 / Irish Times

“The company’s artistic director, Kevin Mallon, conducted his forces with great style, well served by an excellent orchestra.”

Don Giovanni / Cork Opera 2005 / Opera

“The orchestral sounds from the pit under Kevin Mallon are from an entirely different world. The instruments are modern, but the expressive world, the textures and the balances, are driven by the concerns of period performance practice. The sound is light, clean, transparent...”

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REVIEWS (continued)

"The company's Belfast-born artistic director, Kevin Mallon, conducted an orchestra drawn from mainly local musicians who played with an effervescent touch."

Figaro's Wedding / Cork Opera 2005 / The Guardian

"Irish-born conductor Kevin Mallon has chosen his tempos judiciously and cuts a satisfactory stylistic sound."

Ordonez: Symphonies / Naxos CD / Sunday Tribune

"Kevin Mallon and his Toronto band play Pichl's symphonies with style and enthusiasm. Their committed advocacy of rarely heard music is one of the major selling points of a growing number of Naxos discs, and this one is no exception. For the record, their instruments are modern, but their performance style is period-sensitive, with minimal vibrato from the strings and hard sticks for the timpani. There is no harpsichord continuo; none is necessary."

Pichl: Symphonies / Naxos CD / MusicWeb International

"The period instruments of the Toronto-based Aradia Baroque Ensemble provide spry, vibrant accompaniment, including a reconstruction of a 17th-century wind machine for the tempest itself. The voices sing with relish, fluency and refined inflection of the words, and Kevin Mallon directs with a good rhythmic bounce and an acute ear for apt phrasing."

The Tempest / Naxos CD / The Daily Telegraph

"Under Kevin Mallon, the Toronto-based Aradia Ensemble play with verve and rhythmic imagination..."

Purcell: Theatre Music, Volume 1 / Naxos CD / The Daily Telegraph

"The present version, from Canada, offers the opera almost uncut, with a team of singers who, it seems, are mostly new to recording. The result is remarkably successful. Kevin Mallon has a good sense of how to pace the extended dialogue sections and control the dramatic unfolding of the work, and his feeling for Rameau's tempi and the flow of the music is sound. ...it is heartening to have a performance of such quality and such feeling for the music and its mode of expression from a group of relatively inexperienced performers."

Castor et Pollux / Naxos CD / Gramophone

"A sprightly Canadian performance under Kevin Mallon. The orchestra is as stylish as the soloists in an appropriately melodramatic performance, with the eloquent Colin Ainsworth and Joshua Hopkins in the twin title roles."

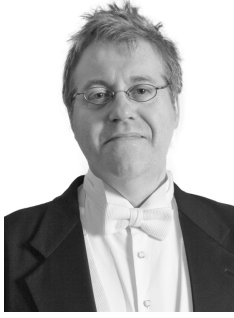
Castor et Pollux / Naxos CD / The Observer (CD of the Week)

"Qian Zhou plays with a lovely singing tone and Mallon directs with flair."

Saint-Georges: Violin Concertos / Naxos CD / The Sunday Times

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REVIEWS (continued)

"The Toronto Chamber Orchestra plays modern instruments, though the members adopt classical playing styles. Kevin Mallon gives a great deal of polish to his leadership. Recording and notes are first class."

Vanhal: Symphonies, Vol 4 / Naxos CD / American Record Guide

"Naxos could well be on to a big winner with Kevin Mallon and his fine Aradia ensemble. Mallon captures the underlying effect of each movement in the Venetian composer's 'alternative' Dixit Dominus and Gloria settings without throwing all caution, and good taste, to the wind. The benefits are obvious in the Dixit, helped by distinguished solo singing and eloquent, rich-toned instrumental playing."

Vivaldi: Sacred Music, Volume 1 / Naxos CD / Classic fM

"Kevin Mallon has regularly made his mark through vital readings of the baroque repertoire and this is no exception. The Aradia Ensemble on period instruments play well and the fairly long recitatives are taken at rather brisk tempos, which is a blessing in more ways than one. The dramatic tension is definitely maintained. Besides the harpsichord a cello and a theorbo are also employed as continuo instruments. Overall the instrumental side of this project is eminently well taken care of. I prefer the thrill and potency of this reading to a more polished but meek and bloodless version."

Griselda / Naxos CD / MusicWeb International

"...the conducting of Kevin Mallon has an expressive alertness and adaptability..."

Un ballo in maschera / Cork Opera 2005 / The Irish Times

"Beguilingly performed on modern instruments with historical awareness, these affectionate interpretations of Baroque treasures make for ideal late-night listening."

Baroque Oboe d'amore concertos / Naxos CD / Classic fm

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