

## James Maddalena

### *Baritone*

*(Updated January 2010. Please discard previous materials.)*

The renowned baritone James Maddalena commands a large and varied repertoire ranging from Monteverdi to contemporary opera. He first gained international recognition for his notable portrayal of the title role in the world premier of John Adams' *Nixon in China*, directed by Peter Sellars at Houston Grand Opera followed by performances at Netherland Opera, the Edinburgh Festival, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Washington Opera, Frankfurt Opera, Australia's Adelaide Festival, and at the Chatelet in Paris.

His association with John Adams continued in two more recent roles: the Captain in Adams' *The Death of Klinghoffer*, which premiered at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels and received performances at the Opera de Lyon, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, San Francisco Opera, and at the Vienna Festival prior to being recorded by Nonesuch under Kent Nagano; and Jack Hubbard in *Doctor Atomic* for San Francisco Opera.

Mr. Maddalena has appeared with many other leading opera companies in the United States and abroad: New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, Atlanta Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Opera Boston, Frankfurt Opera, and Glyndebourne Festival Opera, as well as with the Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Royal Scottish Orchestra, Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome and the London Symphony Orchestra. He is a frequent collaborator with director Peter Sellars and sang major roles in Sellars's stagings of the Mozart/Da Ponte operas (the Count in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*), as well as his productions of operas by Haydn, Handel and John Adams.

Besides Adams, he has collaborated with many contemporary composers, including John Harbison, Gunther Schuller, Elliot Goldenthal, Robert Moran, Domenic Argento, Marc Blitzstein, and Michael Tippett, among others. He sang the world premiere of Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk* with Houston Grand Opera later heard at San Francisco Opera, a production that was recorded by Teldec under Donald Runnicles. He also sang the premiere of Stewart Wallace's *The Bonesetter's Daughter* at San Francisco Opera in 2008. In St. Louis, James Maddalena sang Hobson in the premiere of David Carlson's *The Midnight Angel*. He sang the role of Gideon March in Mark Adamo's *Little Women* at the Houston Grand Opera and the premiere of Elliot Goldenthal's Vietnam Oratorio *Fire Water Paper* with the Pacific Symphony Orchestra, recorded for Sony Classical and followed by performances of the oratorio with the Boston Symphony under Seiji Ozawa at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. And he gave the world premiere of Harbison's *Four Psalms* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

In 2008, James Maddalena sang the title role in the premiere of Kirke Mechem's *John Brown* at the Lyric Opera of Kansas City and in July, 2009 he made his Santa Fe Opera debut in the

premiere Paul Moravec's *The Letter*. Fall 2009 brought his return to New York City Opera as Mordecai in Weisgall's *Esther*. He has been invited to return to Santa Fe in 2010 for the premiere of Lewis Spratlan's "*Life is a Dream*" and in the fall will make his debut with the Opera de Monte-Carlo in the premiere of Tod Machover's *Death and the Powers*.

An active concert artist, James Maddalena can be heard in repertoire ranging from Bach to Hindemith. He has performed *The Messiah* with Boston's Handel and Haydn Society, Hindemith's *Requiem* with Wolfgang Sawallisch and the Orchestra of the Accademia di Santi Cecilia in Rome, the *St. John Passion* in Turin, Italy, Harbison's *Words from Paterson* with the San Francisco Symphony, and *Carmina Burana* in Seville, Spain and Palermo, Italy. He sang Schubert's *Die Winterreise* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music with Robert Spano as accompanist and the complete cycle of Bach cantatas with Boston's Emmanuel Music.

James Maddalena has recorded for Decca/London, BMG, Classical Catalyst, Nonesuch, Teldec, Sony Classical, Harmonia Mundi, and EMI. He can be heard on the Grammy Award-winning recording of *Nixon In China* (Nonesuch) and the Emmy Award-winning PBS telecast, now on DVD.

Press comments:

Mordecais in Weisgall's *Esther*, New York City Opera:

"The baritone James Maddalena found the mix of fear and defiance in the character of Mordecai."  
New York Times - November 8, 2009

"James Maddalena as a dignified, anguished Mordecai."  
San Francisco Chronicle - November 8, 2009

"James Maddalena was a warm-voiced, sympathetic Mordecai."  
Musical America.com - November 9, 2009

"James Maddalena sang and acted sensitively as her uncle Mordecai."  
New York Post - November 10, 2009

"James Maddalena sustained sympathy as Mordecai."  
Financial Times - November 9, 2009

"James Maddalena gives a masterful performance as Howard Joyce, the sympathetic but compromised lawyer."  
Financial Times - August 10, 2009

Howard Joyce in Paul Moravec's *The Letter*, Santa Fe Opera:

"Baritone James Maddalena lent eloquent voice to the conflicted feelings of the lawyer, Howard Joyce."  
SFCV.org - August 11, 2009

"Maddalena was his usual strong, characterful self as the lawyer. This was probably the richest, most complex male character in the opera and Maddalena's portrayal was faultless."  
Music Web International - August 18, 2009

“The cast is wonderful: baritone James Maddalena is superb as the ethically challenged lawyer, Howard Joyce.”  
OperaWest - August 18, 2009

“James Maddalena, as Howard Joyce, Leslie’s deeply conflicted lawyer, was in good voice.”  
New York Times - August 4, 2009

“James Maddalena captured the attorney Joyce’s conflicted loyalties well as the friend of Robert who must betray his principles to obtain the evidence that will save the guilty Leslie. Maddalena possesses an ample resonant baritone and made the most of his soul-searching aria.”  
Chicago Classical Review - August 5, 2009

“James Maddalena as Howard Joyce, a Singapore lawyer who has no illusions about Leslie’s actions, provided a welcome vocal and dramatic counterweight to Racette’s power. He subtly conveyed his dislike for the task of saving a murderess while carrying out what he must do for the sake of a fellow colonial. A fortunate circumstance.”  
Albuquerque Journal - July 27, 2009

Art Kamen in *The Bonesetter's Daughter*, San Francisco Opera:

“Other standouts are James Maddalena as Art Kamen...”  
Dallas Morning News - October 4, 2008

“...and the singers, including James Maddalena as Ruth's well-meaning but befuddled American Jewish husband, were first rate.”  
Culturvulture.net - October 2, 2008

John Brown in Kirke Mechem’s *John Brown*, Lyric Opera of Kansas City:

“A cast headed by two powerful singing actors, especially James Maddalena, whose John Brown evolves as a stern, compassionate, ultimately sympathetic figure of much complexity.”  
Toronto Star - May 17, 2008

“The Lyric could hardly have done better than casting James Maddalena as Brown. Maddalena, onstage almost without interruption, makes of Brown a towering and commanding figure.”  
Opera Today - May 12, 2008

“Mr. Maddalena is the very personification of Brown's righteous indignation, with a strong, sinewy baritone.”  
Dallas Morning News - May 9, 2008

“As Brown, baritone James Maddalena declaims like God giving dictation. This Brown is not a wild-eyed fanatic but a family man of holy rage, pushed to extremes to right one of history's greatest wrongs.”  
The Pitch - May 9, 2008

“Baritone James Maddalena sang well and acted strongly in the title role.”  
St. Louis Post Dispatch - May 7, 2008

“Brown’s heroism is enhanced by the bronzed-voice mastery of baritone James Maddalena. It’s hard to imagine anyone else in American opera who could more powerfully convey both the sympathy and the hardheadedness of Mechem’s Brown. His was one of the few voices in the cast that could always project over the busy orchestration.”  
Kansas City Star - May 5, 2008

“Mechem's work is breathtaking, aided by the rich performances of Maddalena.”  
Anevibe.com – May 2008

Don Alfonso in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, New York City Opera:

“What made the afternoon work, however, was Don Alfonso: James Maddalena's graceful stage presence, excellent diction and discreet humor rode herd on his exuberant young cast mates.”

New York Times – October 24, 2006

“It was a delicacy that Rudel made into magic, vastly helped by one of those special casts of brilliant young American singers that characterize New York City Opera at its best: James Maddalena as the older friend who cynicism rotates the plot.”

New York Post – October 24, 2006

Tovey in Bennett's *The Mines of Sulphur*, Glimmerglass Opera:

“James Maddalena is his accomplice, Tovey, and he projects just the right degree of oily cowardice.”

Opera News – November 2005

Jack Hubbard in Adams' *Doctor Atomic*, San Francisco Opera:

“The elegant baritone James Maddalena (who created the title role in Mr. Adams' ‘Nixon In China’) portrays the meteorologist Jack Hubbard, who must suffer the tirades of General Groves.”

New York Times – October 3, 2005

Oscar in Blitzstein's *Regina*, Bard Summerscape Festival:

“‘Singing actor’ was a preferred term of description in the cast biographies and it proved accurate: James Maddalena was particularly fine as Regina's bitter brother Oscar.”

New York Times – August 1, 2005

“There in the center, with his deep, fully realized, effortless characterization and powerful singing, was baritone James Maddalena as John Proctor, adding yet another memorable role to his lengthy catalogue. ‘I got chills he second he walkde onstage,’ a friend remarked during intermission, and she was right – Proctor was all there even before he opened his mouth. He was the only performer who rose above the simplistic, heavy-handed stage business. Even the other members of the cast applauded him during the curtain calls.”

Boston Phoenix – April 23, 2005

John Proctor in Ward's *The Crucible*, Opera Boston:

“Baritone James Maddalena embodied with passionate conviction the part of a sinful but truthful man, who accepts the consequences of his actions and will not compromise his conscience, and he backed it up with centered singing tone. This was a towering performance by a true singing actor, a complete operatic artist.”

Boston Globe – April 9, 2005

Colonel and Colette in Catán's *Salsipuedes...*, Houston Grand Opera:

“Baritone James Maddalena lent his sweetly firm voice to the dual roles of the Colonel and Madame Colette. While Maddalena played the bumbling Colonel as a cross between Mitch Miller and Don Quixote, he was deliciously clunky as Colette. Never for a minute believably feminine as he lumbered around in red platform sandals and shiny green sheath with matching turban. He murmured a gorgeous pianissimo ‘O Captain, my Captain’ to end Act II, took a final puff, threw the cigarette off the pier and salsaed off into the darkness.”

Opera News – February 2005

Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, The Cantata Singers:

“Magnificent James Maddalena, heartbreaking in that last bass aria.”

Boston Phoenix – March 3, 2004

The Captain in Adams' *The Death of Klinghoffer*, Brooklyn Academy of Music:

“James Maddalena was in perfect form as the captain.”

Opera News – March 2004

“Of the singers, only baritone James Maddalena was a holdover from the original ‘Klinghoffer’ cast. He was superb in diction and manner as the weak-willed Captain who considers himself a peacemaker but is cruelly betrayed by the terrorists.”

Chicago Tribune – December 7, 2003

“The BAM cast served the cause handsomely, with James Maddalena calmly resolute as the captain.”

MusicalAmerica.com – December 5, 2003

“The baritone James Maddalena who created the role of the captain, again gives a remarkable portrayal of a decent man who blames himself for his foolish innocence, singing with wistful warmth and crisp diction.”

New York Times – December 5, 2003