

PRESSQUOTES

Jeni Bern

SOPRANO

Professor Prentice / Anthropocene / Scottish Opera / 2019
Cond. Stuart Stratford / Dir. Matthew Richardson

"The musical highlight is a duet for the two sopranos, lyrical, expansive and intrinsically operatic."
(The Times / Hugh Canning)

"The two female roles taken by Jeni Bern as Prentice and mezzo soprano Sarah Champion's Daisy were both stunning..."
(Seen & Heard International / Gregor Tassie)

Fiordiligi / Così fan tutte / SWAP'ra Gala / 2018
Cond. Susannah Wapshott / Dir. Poppy Burton-Morgan

"Top-notch... Jeni Bern's unusual, modern Fiordiligi in tandem with Sarah Tynan's experienced Despina and Katie Bray's Dorabella..."
(David Nice / The Arts Desk)

"I particularly loved the way Jeni Bern's Fiordiligi spent the whole scene never quite putting both shoes on!"
(Planet Hugill / Robert Hugill)

Aunt Norris / Mansfield Park / The Grange Festival / 2017
Cond. David Parry / Dir. Martin Lloyd-Evans

"Bern did magnificently"
(Planet Hugill / Robert Hugill)

"Personality oozes from Sarah Pring's Lady Bertram and Jeni Bern's Mrs Norris"
(The Stage / George Hall)

"The ever versatile Jeni Bern puts punch into this part: one can almost feel the tutting."
(Mark Aspen)

A Night at the Opera / Opera North / 2017
Cond. Jessica Cottis & James Holmes

"The most impressive vocal performance of the first half, however, was Jeni Bern's faultless Song to the Moon from Rusalka... Bern's witty and jazzy I Can Cook Too from Bernstein's On the Town was a joy..."
(The Reviews Hub / Rom Simpson)

Lilli Vanessi/Katharine / Kiss Me, Kate / Welsh National Opera / 2016
Cond. James Holmes / Dir. Jo Davies

"Jeni Bern as Lilli/Katherine commands the entire show as a noisy, loud-mouthed shrew both offstage and on..."

(Bachtrack / Simon Rees)

"Jeni Bern's glamorously volatile Lilli Vanessi..."

(The Stage / George Hall)

"Quirijn de Lang and Jeni Bern were outstanding... One moment of Ms. Bern's that I shall long treasure was her passage of parodic coloratura at the end of Act I, which reminded one of just how much operatic experience and achievement both she and Mr de Lang have on their CVs."

(Seen & Heard International / Glyn Pursglove)

"Jeni Bern as Lilli Vanessi/Katherine is sublime to the point of faultless as the diva performer."

(The Reviews Hub / John Roberts)

"Lilli Vanessi, played by the wonderful Jeni Bern"

(North West End / Sarah Goldsmith)

"...it is Bern who shows superb comic ability, in particular, while she's singing I Hate Men you could be forgiven for thinking you're watching a music hall performance."

(The Reviews Hub / Chris Williams)

"the vocal feistiness of Jeni Bern as Kate"

(Mark Ronan Theatre Reviews)

"Jeni Bern's Lilli flashes her coloratura in I sing of love"

(GloucestershireLive / Colin Davison)

Woglinde & Waldvogel / Der Ring des Nibelungen / Opera North / 2016
Cond. Richard Farnes / Dir. Peter Mumford

Das Rheingold

"...there was an excellent trio of Rhine maidens – Jeni Bern, Madeleine Shaw and Sarah Castle – vocally full-bodied and well-blended, that put the ROH's more recent exponents to shame."

(Opera Britannia)

"Jeni Bern's silvery Woglinde"

(Classicalsource / Peter Reed)

"The Rhine maidens Woglinde and Wellgunde, powerful sopranos Jeni Bern and Madeleine Shaw"

(Keighley News / David Knights)

Siegfried

"Jeni Bern a veritable breath of fresh air as a lively Woodbird..."

(Opera Today / Mark Berry)

"The twinkle in Bern's eye (also) served her well as a prancing woodbird..."

(Opera / Martin Dreyer)

"...Jeni Bern did an enjoyable turn as the Woodbird."

(The Guardian / Martin Kettle)

"Jeni Bern was an appropriately chirpy Woodbird."
(Bachtrack / Mark Pullinger)

"Jeni Bern's fine Woodbird"
(MusicOMH / Sam Smith)

"Jeni Bern made a sweet and pertly sung Woodbird"
(The Arts Desk / Peter Quantrill)

"Jeni Bern's stratospheric floated silvery headnotes."
(Ilkley Gazette / Claire Lomax)

"...Jeni Bern (Woodbird) and Ceri Williams (Erda) prove that there is no such thing as a small part."
(The Huddersfield Daily Examiner / Ron Simpson)

"Jeni Bern found some interesting physicality as the Woodbird and had a wonderfully bright tone"
(The Reviews Hub / Charlotte Broadbent)

Götterdämmerung

"The Rhinemaidens, counterbalancing perhaps the Norns, made a beautiful appearance in the final act."
(Opera Today / Colin Clarke)

"...the Rhinemaidens are beautifully sung and sharply characterised"
(The Huddersfield Daily Examiner / Ron Simpson)

"...the Norns and the Rhine Maidens – were very fine indeed, and the latter as good as I've ever heard, crowned by the flawless Woglinde of Jeni Bern, whose voice, albeit bright almost to the point of glare, is of such easy, even production and musicality that I'd happily listen to her sing whatever it pleased her to tackle."
(Opera Britannia)

"Jeni Bern, Madeleine Shaw and Sarah Castle made an appealing trio of Rhinemaidens."
(MusicOMH / Sam Smith)

"Jeni Bern, Madeleine Shaw and Sarah Castle were stunning as the Rhinemaidens at the top of act 3"
(The Reviews Hub / Charlotte Broadbent)

Lilli Vanessi/Katharine / Kiss Me, Kate / Opera North / 2015 **Cond. David Charles Abell / Dir. Jo Davies**

"Jeni Bern in magnificent voice"
(The York Press / Charles Hutchinson)

"...the gorgeously toned coupling of Quirijn de Lang and Jeni Bern"
(The Stage / Mark Shenton)

"...they present Fred Graham and Lilli Vanessi as credible and sympathetic characters, singing their romantic numbers "Wunderbar" and "So in Love" through elegant legato and projecting the more knockabout stuff such as "I Hate Men" and "Where is the Life That Late I Led?" with sharp-tongued wit."
(The Telegraph / Rupert Christiansen)

"Bern's splendid, disciplined voice"
(The Observer / Kate Kellaway)

"...the soaring voices of Jeni Bern and Quirijn de Lang"
(The Express / Michael Arditti)

"...the gorgeously toned coupling of Quirijn de Lang and Jeni Bern"
(The Stage / Mark Shenton)

"...Jeni Bern gives as good as she gets as his former wife Lilli; a genuinely operatic part that gives her fine, upper extension a workout."
(The Guardian / Alfred Hickling)

"He (Quirijn de Lang) and Jeni Bern (Lilli-Kate) bring real power and colour to the more operatic numbers, she alternately singing beautifully and screaming the house down."
(Huddersfield Daily Examiner / Gavin Castle)

"Jeni Bern makes a wonderful Katherine as her antics fail to make an impression on the stubbornly testosterone-fuelled Petruccio... The wonderful soprano of Bern and the complementary baritone of de Lang do full justice to Porter's delicious score, with the rousing 'Wunderbar' bringing the house down."
(On: Yorkshire Magazine / Sandra Callard)

"Bern is equally moving when she sings the piece (So In Love) earlier in the show, proving, if there was ever doubt amongst all the burlesque, that she is a gem in any operatic context. She is in perfect comic control for her mock coloratura at the end of Act I, which is disrupted by a gun shot, in a well-managed moment straight out of a Marx Brothers movie."
(Bachtrack / Richard Willcocks)

"Jeni Bern's Lilli Vanessi/Kate is a terrific foil, imperious but vulnerable."
(The Arts Desk / Graham Rickson)

"The orchestra tucks into Porter's swoon and swing, while Jeni Bern and Quirijn de Lang give his songs full aria"
(The Sunday Times / David Jays)

"They [Bern & de Lang] were at their most appealing when duetting in Wunderbar."
(Opera / Martin Dreyer)

"Fred Graham/Petruccio and Lilli Vanessi/Kate, are taken by Opera North favourites Quirijn de Lang and Jeni Bern respectively. Both show considerable adaptability in meeting the demands of substantial speaking roles."
(Musical Theatre Review / Mike Tilling)

"Jeni Bern's operatic voice lifts Vanessi's solos to a new pitch"
(Leeds Living / Esther Marshall)

"For her part, the feisty Miss Bern delivers a suitably aggressive 'I Hate Men' and remains spiritedly defiant for a very long time. Yet, her 'So In Love', full of heartfelt yearning"
(The Public Reviews / Tom Tollett)

"Quirijn De Lang was a caddish Fred Graham, while Jeni Bern put in feisty portrayal of his ex-wife Lilli Vanessi. They enjoyed a sizzling chemistry, wonderfully conveyed in their song Wunderbar. Bern's I Hate Men as Kate, was delivered with acidic bite."
(The Northern Echo / Gavin Engelbrecht)

"Jeni Bern's operatic voice lifts Vanessi's solos to a new pitch"
(Leeds Living / Esther Marshall)

"...Jeni Bern proves an equally impressive sparring partner"
(The Gay UK)

"Quirijn De Lang and Jeni Bern, the key protagonists, shine in their roles offering the audience a true abundance of wit, charm and delight"

(Jonathan Baz reviews / Megan Kinsey)

"Jeni Bern as Lilli and Quirijn de Lang as Fred sang well, especially Lilli, who plunged into the 'Mad Scene' scene of Donizetti's Lucia de Lammermoor at her suitor's ardent passion."

(Keighley News)

"Bern's glowering diva who comes to the fore in a brilliant rendition of I Hate Men."

(Chronicle Live / David Whetstone)

"Jeni Bern as Lilli Vanessi/Katherine brought real fire and passion to the role and man has that lady got a set of pipes on her!"

(A Forte for Fashion)

Susie Trevor / Lady, Be Good! / Teatro de la Zarzuela / 2015

Cond. Kevin Farrell / Dir. Emilio Sagi

"...the soprano Jeni Bern as Susie Trevor was simply masterful and enthusiastically applauded in the beautiful hit "the Man I Love""

(Opera World / Germán García Tomás)

"Jeni Bern as Susie, in my humble opinion was the best in the production, with great moments in her interpretation of The Man I Love, beautiful timbre, phrasing and dynamics..."

(Desde La Platea / Jonathan Fernandez)

From Paris with Love / Opera North / 2014

Cond. David Parry & James Holmes / Dir. Annabel Arden & Rosalind Parker

"Jeni Bern's opening arioso shows what a terrific Manon she would make, if she had chance to sing the rest of it."

(The Guardian / Alfred Hickling)

"Musetta's "Quando me'n vo", most effectively delivered by Jeni Bern... Equally impressive were Jeni Bern's exuberant Piaf renditions."

(Bachtrack / Richard Wilcocks)

"Bern came into her own with an authentically strident 'Padam padam'"

(Opera / Martin Dreyer)

"Bern gave a lusty rendition of L'Accordeoniste and a powerhouse performance of Padam Padam – with a breathtaking last note that seemed to last forever."

(The Northern Echo / Gavin Engelbrecht)

Cunegonde / Candide / Gewandhaus, Leipzig / 2013

Cond. Kristjan Järvi / MDR-sinfonieorchester

"She convinced with her brilliant voice and a lively theatrical representation."

Tytania / A Midsummer Night's Dream / Opera North / 2013
Cond. Stuart Stratford / Dir. Martin Duncan

"The scenes between Jeni Bern's rapturous Tytania and Henry Waddington's endearing Bottom have extraordinary tenderness, as well as great wit... Laing and Bern are both outstanding in their roles."
(The Guardian / Tim Ashley)

"...lovely tone and more than a dash of eroticism"
(The York Press / Martin Dreyer)

"Jeni Bern, in slinky satin, contributes considerably to the erotic content with her Tytania, and she is superb when exhorting Bottom, in his see-through ass's head, to "sit thee down upon this flowery bed", doing full justice to some of Britten's best music for a soprano."
(Bachtrack / Richard Wilcocks)

"James Laing and Jeni Bern, repeating their roles as King and Queen of the Fairies, seem to me to be even more authoritative than before, Tytania in particular, immaculately sung by Bern with diction to render the use of surtitles superfluous."
(WhatsOnStage / Ron Simpson)

"Jeni Bern's glittery silver coloratura"
(Opera Britannia / Geoffrey Mogridge)

"Tytania - a sexy and provocative performance by Jeni Bern"
(Opera / Michael Kennedy)

"Jeni Bern's powerful voice"
(Manchester Evening News / Robert Beale)

Galatea / Acis and Galatea / Nimbus Records / 2012
Cond. Stephen Darlington / Oxford Philomusica

"This new HIP recording of Acis and Galatea (1829) is something of a guilty pleasure - and a sheer delight!"
(Musical Pointers / Peter Graham Woolfe)

"Jeni Bern brings a caressingly light touch as the sea-nymph Galatea"
(Gramophone Magazine)

"Jeni Bern is terrific in the chorus, "Galatea, must my Acis still bemoan", singing brilliantly around the interspersions from the choir. She brings sensitivity and beauty to the aria "Heart, the seat of soft delight" with beautiful accompaniment from the orchestra."
(The Classical Reviewer)

"Galatea is Jeni Bern, pure of voice and true of intonation"
(MusicWeb / Jonathan Woolf)

Casilda / The Gondoliers / G&S Opera Company / 2012
Cond. David Steadman / Dir. Jeff Clarke

"As the daughter Casilda, Jeni Bern is as sweet and dutiful an aristocrat as befits a Gilbert royal. She matches her lover Luiz, Daniel Hoadley, in voice and style perfectly, and the pair make a happy contribution to the performance."
(Bachtrack.com / Andrew H. King)

"Jeni Bern – one of our top operatic sopranos and among the most versatile – outstanding as Casilda"
(Manchester Theatre Awards / Robert Beale)

"Daniel Hoadley and Jeni Bern made much of their minor yet important roles: their convincing sincerity came across nicely in their duet, "There was a time"."
(Seen & Heard International / Raymond J Walker)

Woglinde / Das Rheingold / Opera North / 2011
Cond. Richard Farnes / Dir. Peter Mumford

"The voluptuous Rhinemaidens are sung by Jeni Bern (Woglinde), Jennifer Johnston (Wellgunde) and Sarah Castle (Flosshilde); their voices balanced, superbly blended and well able to ride Wagner's rich orchestral canvas."
(Opera Britannia / Geoffrey Mogridge)

"This flighty trio – Jeni Bern, Jennifer Johnston and Sarah Castle – sets the bar high at the start, finding a keen blend."
(Opera / Martin Dreyer)

"An enchanting trio of Rhinemaidens got things off to a sparkling start."
(The Telegraph / Rupert Christiansen)

"...the superb Rhinemaidens (Jeni Bern, Jennifer Johnston, Sarah Castle)"
(The Sunday Times / Hugh Canning)

"...three characterful Rhinemaidens (Jeni Bern, Jennifer Johnston, Sarah Castle) are revelations."
(The Times / Richard Morrison)

"...as fine a trio of Rhinemaidens as you could expect to hear anywhere."
(Intermezzo)

"Jeni Bern, Jennifer Johnston and Sarah Castle were a bewitching trio of Rhinedaughters."
(Wagner Society / Katie Barnes)

Eurydice / Orpheus in the Underworld / Opera Holland Park / 2009
Cond. John Owen Edwards / Dir. Tom Hawkes

"Jeni Bern sings with bravado as Eurydice."
(Opera / Rupert Christiansen)

"Jeni Bern sang Eurydice with sweetness and wit and very proper English, but turned into an Essex princess of toecurling charmlessness in the spoken sections."
(Intermezzo)

"Jeni Bern was outstanding as Eurydice"
(MusicalCriticism / Agnes Kory)

Trixie / Let 'em Eat Cake / Opera North / 2009
Cond. Wyn Davies / Dir. Caroline Gawn

"it is left to the scene between Jeni Bern and Richard Burkhard as Trixie and Kruger, to show the rest of the cast just how Gershwin should sound."
(Yorkshire Post)

"Jeni Bern makes a raucous party animal as Trixie."
(The Independent)

"Highlights include Richard Suart's bumbling General Snookfield and his sassy sidekick, Jeni Bern's Trixie Flynn."
(The Stage)

Tytania / A Midsummer Night's Dream / Opera North / 2008
Cond. Stuart Stratford / Dir. Martin Duncan

"Jeni Bern matches him (Oberon) well as a slinky Tytania, a true diva whose coloratura come-on to a confused donkey is remarkably seductive."
(The Guardian / Alfred Hickling)

"Jeni Bern, meanwhile, goes off her head in flights of high-soprano fancy in pursuit of Henry Waddington's asinine Bottom."
(The Independent / George Hall)

"Jeni Bern's glam-orous starlet Tytania and Henry Waddington's earthy Bottom are delicious antipodes. Bern sings Britten's stratospheric melismata as well as she looks."
(The Times / Hugh Canning)

"James Laing... and Jeni Bern's scintillating Tytania command the stage and their magical kingdom."
(The Stage)

"Jeni Bern's nymphomaniac Tytania rivalled Waddington's performance for vocal virtuosity and sheer stage presence."
(Manchester Evening News)

Susanna / The Marriage of Figaro / Opera North / 2006
Cond. Christian Gansch / Dir. Caroline Gawn

"Jeni Bern is a pure toned, feisty Susanna"
(The Stage)

"Jeni Bern is as fiery, feisty and winsome as every Susanna should be, and her musicality of phrasing and tenderness and sprightliness of inflection are delectable throughout. She all but eclipses...Figaro (perhaps this is the point)..."
(The Times / Hilary Finch)

"Jeni Bern's Susanna is a joy: feisty, full of energy and a perfect match for Wynn Pencarreg's Figaro"
(British Theatre Guide)

"There were some exceptional vocal performances. Wyn Pencarreg and Jeni Bern played Figaro and Susanna to perfection."
(MusicOMH)

Paquette / Candide / Le Théâtre du Châtelet / 2006
Cond. John Axelrod / Dir. Robert Carsen

"Of the women, the Paquette of Jeni Bern was as enticing as one could wish."
(Les Echos)

"Jeni Bern incarnated a charming Paquette"
(Opera / Hugh Canning)

Musetta / La bohème / Opera Zuid / 2005
Cond. Laurent Wagner / Dir. Franco Ripa di Meana

"Jeni Bern as Musetta is a delightful sex kitten, who forms a beautiful contrast with Mimi."
(Limburgs Dagblad)

"The flamboyant Scottish soprano Jeni Bern (Musetta) shows style with bare legs in the famous aria "Quando me'n vo"..."
(De Volkskrant)

"...She proves herself especially in the high notes like a fish in the water."
(De Telegraf)

Gretel / Hansel & Gretel / Opera North / 2005
Cond. Richard Farnes / Dir. John Fuljames

"Jeni Bern's Gretel and Julianne Young's Hansel dress in sloppy casual wear but there was nothing sloppy about their opening night performances as they careened about their restricted space with bikes, double bass cases and balloons.....(Bern's) spunk and sparkle remained delightful."
(The Times)

"Julianne Young and Jeni Bern are entrancing as the children."
(York Times)

"...the most convincing Hansel and Gretel I've seen for a long time."
(British Theatre Guide)

"...individually they sang with gusto and made a convincing pair of querulous siblings."
(The Telegraph)

Yum Yum / The Mikado / English National Opera / 2004
Cond. Gareth Jones / Dir. Jonathan Miller

"Almost everybody in the cast had done the show before; the exception was soprano Jeni Bern as Yum Yum, an adept comic actress who sang her main solo "The sun whose rays", most beautifully."
(Opera Japonica / Ruth Elleson)

"Maid supreme Yum Yum was a real star of the show – Jeni Bern giving her role debut. Deliciously coquettish, miraculously sweet, her solos consistently brought great pleasure."
(Musicweb)

"Jeni Bern's Yum Yum: with her gorgeous clear tone and solid comic timing, she's a treat to watch."
(Metro)

"Jeni Bern... displayed deft timing, sang sweetly, and enunciated her words with crystal clarity (a lesson to some others)."
(Richard Morrison – The Times)

"...even when she is played so gloriously by Jeni Bern. As Yum Yum she was the embodiment of a young society lady and delivered her spoken dialogue with Cowardesque aplomb."
(Gay.com)

Princesse / L'enfant et les sortilège / Opera North / 2003
Cond. Emanuel Plasson / Dir. Nigel Lowry

"Jeni Bern was outstanding as the lamenting Princesse, an ice maiden who emerged from the fridge."
(The Independent)

"Notably Jeni Bern's effortlessly soaring fairy-tale princess"
(The Financial Times)

Sophie / Der Rosenkavalier / English National Opera / 2003
Cond. Vassily Sinaisky / Dir. Jonathan Miller

"...when a substitute Sophie as good as Jeni Bern comes along, high praise is due. Susan Gritton cancelled with less than 24 hours to go but Bern – an enchantingly pretty young soprano – looked as if she knew the Jonathan Miller production inside out and seemed completely unfazed by having to go on at short notice. Indeed she was a significantly superior Fraulein Fanninal to any of those I have heard in Dresden, Cologne or Duisburg recently, spinning sensuously silvery, long breathed lines in the high-lying Presentation of the Rose phrases every note hit dead in the centre. Any international house would have been proud to present such an entirely lovely performer of this difficult role, and she is a mettlesome actress, really giving her Ochs a run for his money."
(Opera / Hugh Canning)

Oscar / Un ballo in maschera/ Opera Zuid / 2003
Cond. Laurent Wagner / Dir. Mike Ashman

"Jeni Bern gives a brilliant contribution in the travesty role of the page Oscar."
(De Telgraf)

"The beautiful clear and confident soprano voice of Jeni Bern."
(Dagblad de Limburger)

"Jeni Bern is delightful"
(Gay Krant)

Amour / Orpheus & Eurydice / English National Opera / 2001
Cond. Harry Christophers / Dir. Martha Clarke

"Jeni Bern's Amor... is an unexpected delight... disarmingly lusty and pushy..."
(The Financial Times)

"The show was stolen by Jeni Bern, a knowing Amor, who stage-manages the proceedings, whose poise on stage is compelling to watch and whose diction is quite remarkable."
(Musicweb)

Title role / Partenope / Early Opera Company / 2001
Cond. Christian Currnyn / Dir. Netia Jones

"Bern was a pleasing and alluring Partenope and she sings well too."
(Classicalsource)

"Partenope herself (Jeni Bern) was suitably regal in looks and voice."
(The Independent)

"Jeni Bern somehow made the power of her music, superbly sung, exactly right for an executive tart."
(Concertonet)

"Bern is a sensual Partenope"
(The Guardian)

Amor / Orfeo ed Eurydice / Welsh National Opera / 2000
Cond. Paul McCreesh / Dir. Patrice Courier & Moshe Leise

"Played with enormous style by Jeni Bern, l'Amour was beautifully arch, infuriating and knowing."
(Opera Review)

"Only Jeni Bern as the god amour hit the mark exactly, musically and dramatically."
(The Guardian)