

# Jenny Stafford

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## Jenny Stafford

is now firmly established as one of the brightest young talents on the UK opera stage. In March 2018, she made her major house debut, with Dutch National Opera, as Sarah in James MacMillan's *Clemency*. Bachtrack.com praised how her '*soprano soared in Sarah's ecstatic music with dramatic intensity*'.

Jenny Stafford trained at King's College, London and the Royal Academy of Music, winning the Isabel Jay Operatic Prize and the Dame Eva Turner Award, and at ENO Opera Works and the Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto.

In the UK, Jenny Stafford has appeared: with Bampton Classical Opera as Tisbé (*Cendrillon*) and as Eginia (*Gli sposi malcontenti*); with the Buxton International Festival as Prima Donna (*Viva la diva*); at the Cadogan Hall as Vitellia; with English Touring Opera as Despina, Melissa (*Amadigi*), Musetta, and Soprano Soloist (*St John Passion*); with Nevill Holt as Musetta; with Opera North as the Piper (*The Pied Piper of Hamelin*); with Welsh National Opera as Pamina and Papagena; with West Green House Opera as Nedda and Tatyana (*Eugene Onegin*), and Wild Arts as Fiordiligi.

In season 2023/24, she recorded Elettra for Brunswick Vocal Arts; covered Magda for Opera North, covered and sang Miss Jessel at the Theatre Royal, Bath, and gave critically-acclaimed performances as Manon Lescaut for English Touring Opera and Suor Angelica for West Green House Opera.

Rupert Christiansen wrote in The Daily Telegraph that: **Jenny Stafford Shines as Manon Lescaut.** It was Jenny Stafford as Manon who really commanded the stage, with impressive ringing top Cs for declarations of undying passion, and interestingly subtle moments when you could feel a dawning, regretful awareness of her own flightiness.'

Upcoming engagements include her debut with English National Opera as Mary Seton (cover Mary Stewart) in Thea Musgrave's *Mary Queen of Scots* and cover Ellen Orford for Welsh National Opera.



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## Jenny Stafford reviews

### Opera Bohemia, Suor Angelica

Stafford is a compelling stage performer throughout the hour and a quarter, musically absolutely on point in a demanding role - **The Glasgow Herald**

### English Touring Opera, Manon Lescaut

Stafford has a lovely gleam to her voice, giving heart and muscle to her arias - **The Times**

**Jenny Stafford Shines as Manon Lescaut.** It was Jenny Stafford as Manon who really commanded the stage, with impressive ringing top Cs for declarations of undying passion, and interestingly subtle moments when you could feel a dawning, regretful awareness of her own flightiness - **The Daily Telegraph**

Jenny Stafford sings gleamingly as Manon - **The Guardian**

Committed and musically scrupulous as Manon, Jenny Stafford gains in visceral impact as her voice climbs the stave - **The Stage**

Manon is tenderly, lithely sung by Jenny Stafford, expressing an underlying vulnerability rather than either overweening or naive ambition – **Classical Source**

All credit, then, to the singers for wrenching so much poise and power from the thrift-shop catastrophe of this production's look...By the time of the great second-act duet, as Stafford's robust but never harsh soprano cut through swelling orchestration, we could hear not just the ardour but the doubt and inner conflict that each of this pair brings to their passion...Still, both the final duet and the outcast Manon's searing soliloquy of farewell (to love's delusions, and to life itself) left us with a proper respect for Stafford's and Morris's whole-hearted immersion in these roles. They gripped and moved, in spite of everything. Singing of such commitment proves that opera can survive not just its detractors, but its directors too - **The Arts Desk**

Jenny Stafford was a light-toned Manon, sweet on the ear but more a lyric than a spinto soprano - **Bachtrack**

A big hand, therefore, for Jenny Stafford's charismatic Manon - **i news**

Jenny Stafford, bright-voiced and appealing as the fickle heroine - **The Guardian**

Jenny Stafford as Manon...delivers exciting singing in the opera's telling moments - **The Reviews Hub**

The central couple are outstanding: Jenny Stafford's soprano is impressive as is Gareth Dafydd's highly accomplished tenor. Their singing soars—**The Sheffield Star**

The cast, led by Jenny Stafford as Manon and Gareth Dafydd Morris as Des Grieux, delivered strong performances despite the limitations of the English translation. Stafford's portrayal of the titular character was nuanced and emotionally charged, her soprano voice navigating the complex vocal lines with skill and passion - **Fairy Powered Productions**

Voices were exceptional; I was particularly struck by soprano Jenny Stafford, who propelled the story with unwavering vocal energy and a convincing performance as Manon - **A Youngish Perspective**

When we meet Manon, (sung stupendously by Jenny Stafford) she is a young woman about to be sent against her will by her father to a convent - **Cambs News**

All the main roles are sung superbly well...Jenny Stafford's anguished Manon is seen to be torn between carnal and material impulses, equally seduced both by De Grieux's charms and by Geronte's wealth - **Stage Talk Magazine**

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## Jenny Stafford reviews

### West Green House Opera, Pagliacci

Jenny Stafford's vibrant Nedda - **The Stage**

Jenny Stafford was an engaging Nedda, giving a beautifully rendered account of her song to the birds, yet the scene with Thomas Chenhall's strong Silvio showed us that she too could be cavalier, prizing her own freedom above that of others. What Ramster's production showed was that everyone was fallible. And the way Stafford made Nedda realise, during the final play with a play, that Samm's Canio was no longer in character, was nicely realised - **Planet Hugill**

In *Pagliacci* there are fine performances from Jenny Stafford as Nedda, Ronald Samm as Canio, Lawrence Thackeray as Beppe and Thomas Chenhall as Silvio - **Music OMH**

### Welsh National Opera, The Magic Flute

Jenny Stafford's Papagena is a brief role, but her voice remains a treat - **Buzz**

Davies was a rather depressed Papageno but with Jenny Stafford as his bucolic Papagena there developed genuine and enthusiastic sexual chemistry - **Gramophone**

Quirijn de Lang's beautifully balanced romantic coward Papageno, the Queen's bird-catcher, was constantly attended by a lovely array of expertly manipulated hand-puppet birds. As was Jenny Stafford's no-nonsense love-of-his-life, Papagena - **The Fine Times Recorder**

At a different remove was the partnership between Quirijn De Lang's Papageno and Jenny Stafford's Papagena, both roles pleasantly sung - **Opera Today**

Jonathan Lemalu sang a sonorous Sarastro. With Raven McMillon as Pamina and Jenny Stafford as Papagena singing with sincerity, Welsh National Opera's *Magic Flute* was a delightful vocal performance - **The Article**

Neal Davies does his best with the sometimes laboured comedy of birdcatcher Papageno – his duet with Jenny Stafford's Papagena is a charming delight, as it should be - **Bum on a Seat**

The singing, as always with WNO, is superb with Neal Davies evelling in the role of Papageno, the night bird catcher, with a fine baritone and an equally fine sense of fun. He ends up on a rescue mission with Tamino but in truth, all he really wants is to be loved, so it is just as well Jenny Stafford is around as the always smiling day palace bird catcher Papagena to take him to her heart - **Behind the Arras**

### Buxton Festival, Viva la Diva!

Jenny Stafford achieves the razor-sharp florid singing of the standard prima donna (satirised as the 'coloratura that pulverises crystal / coloratura that can be heard in Bristol') whilst maintaining a forceful, indomitable demeanour as the German 'L'assoluta' brought in to play the part. For them, as for Quentin Hayes's Ray (the deputy stage manager who falls into that position after a less than successful audition) it is no mean achievement, as professional musical actors, to perform with deliberate imperfection or knowing detachment from their assumed roles—**Classical Source**

### English Touring Opera, Amadigi

Jenny Stafford brought out the humanity in Melissa, we were aware that this was a love-triangle rather than simply a fearsome sorceress. Stafford brought out the complexities of the character, she was focused on her love for Amadigi yet unafraid of using magic to this about, and Stafford moved finely from the moving woman in love to the terrific fiery aria at the end of Act Two to her profoundly simple death scene. Always engaging and stylish, this was a fine performance and a subtle one—**Planet Hugill**

Jenny Stafford, engaging and impassioned, was Melissa in Saturday's performance—**The Evening Standard**

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## Jenny Stafford reviews

### West Green House Opera, Eugene Onegin

There was much to enjoy from a mostly young cast with its blend of promise and experience. In a powder-blue dress, Jenny Stafford's Tatyana was a credible traversal of self-absorbed bibliophile through to society beauty, dignity and duty amply realised. In between, came an arresting dream sequence at the close of Act One where there was no doubting her arousal as she imagined her first sexual encounter with Onegin. Hers is a clear and silvery soprano voice, and in time she will discover more expressive power and tonal variety for the celebrated letter aria. More compelling was the emotional charge she brought to the closing duet with Nicholas Lester's Onegin, now vocally unrestrained and glowing with suppressed ardour—**Opera Today**

As the bookish Tatyana, Jenny Stafford has the acting ability to put across with finesse the transformation of the shy girl of Act One, secretly looking for a romantic adventure, into the self-assured and graceful noblewoman of Act Three. Her lyrical soprano voice is a joy of fluid refinement—**markaspen.com**

There was much to enjoy from a mostly young cast with its blend of promise and experience. In a powder-blue dress, Jenny Stafford's Tatyana was a credible traversal of self-absorbed bibliophile through to society beauty, dignity and duty amply realised. In between, came an arresting dream sequence at the close of Act One where there was no doubting her arousal as she imagined her first sexual encounter with Onegin. Hers is a clear and silvery soprano voice, and in time she will discover more expressive power and tonal variety for the celebrated letter aria. More compelling was the emotional charge she brought to the closing duet with Nicholas Lester's Onegin, now vocally unrestrained and glowing with suppressed ardour—**Opera Today**

### English Touring Opera, Così fan tutte

Jeremy Sams' garrulous translation was particularly effective in Despina's case, full of earthy idioms that made her seem refreshingly down to earth. Jenny Stafford gave a sparkling and youthful rendition of the character that was infused with a liveliness that made her so much more than the stooge of Don Alfonso, and her surprise, regret, and even shame in the denouement was a convincing instance of the work's many melancholic touches. Her comic avatars as the fez-wearing, chalk-voiced Notary and vibrator-wielding Professor Mesma – a touch of the Marie Stopes there, surely – were deliciously droll - **Opera Wire**

But in particular, he and Despina - played by soprano Jenny Stafford - were a marvellous comedy duo, really playing off of each other's energies. Stafford's Despina was easily my favourite part of the show. Her diction was impeccably clear, her physical comedy well-timed, and her ability to switch between the multiple characters the role requires was both impressive and laugh-out-loud funny – **Schmopera**

Whenever Jenny Stafford's Despina is on hand, the performance gets a lift - **Financial Times**

Comic support came in buckets from Jenny Stafford's game Despina - **The Arts Desk**

As Despina, Jenny Stafford demonstrated the same comic timing and vocal grace that have impressed several times at Bampton Classical Opera - **Opera Today**

Vocal performances rise to a good standard, with some high points along the way...especially Jenny Stafford's vital Despina - **The Stage**

Jenny Stafford and Frederick Long are both naturally ebullient comedians, cheerfully enjoying the chance to overact as Despina and Guglielmo - **The Telegraph**

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Composer	Opera	Role
Bizet	Carmen	Micaela
Britten	Turn of the Screw	Governess/Miss Jessel
Donizetti	Viva la mamma	Daria Garbinati
Handel	Amadigi	Melissa
Holst	Savitri	Savitri
Isouard	Cendrillon	Tisbe
Leoncavallo	Pagliacci	Nedda
McMillan	Clemency	Sarah
Mozart	La clemenza di Tito Cosi fan tutte Idomeneo Die Zauberflote	Vitellia Despina, Fiordiligi Elettra Pamina, Papagena, Erste Dame

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Composer	Opera	Role
Puccini	La boheme Manon Lescaut La rondine Suor Angelica	Mimi, Musetta Manon Magda Suor Angelica
Storace	Gli sposi malcontenti	Eginia
Tchaikovsky	Eugene Onegin	Tatyana
Willcox	The Pied Piper of Hamelin	Piper

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## WEBSITE



## VIDEOS

[Puccini, Suor Angelica: Senza mamma](#)

[Puccini, Manon Lescaut: Alone, lost and abandoned](#)

[Puccini, Manon Lescaut: In quelle trine morbide](#)

[Britten, Turn of the Screw: How Beautiful It Is](#)

[Handel, Amadigi: Destero dell'empia dite](#)

[Handel, Alcina: Io godo, scherzo e rido](#)

[Mozart, Magic Flute: Ach, ich fuhls!](#)

[Mozart, Idomeneo: Oh smania! Oh furie! D'Oreste, d'Aiace](#)

[Mozart, Idomeneo: Idol mio](#)

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