**Justin Vickers, lyric tenor**

has been lauded for his “beautiful, crystalline tone” and “a marriage of both supple voice and striking good looks.” He has been likened to the young Nicolai Gedda and The Washington Post declared him “a pliant Mozartian tenor.” In 2011, Vickers appeared in China, Moscow, France, England, New York, Boston, and Philadelphia—in opera, concert, recital, and in the recording studio—singing literature ranging from Michael Tippett and Benjamin Britten to Verdi’s *La traviata* and Joseph Summer’s operatic setting of *Hamlet*.

With an expanding operatic repertory of nearly forty leading tenor roles, Vickers is a tenor of inexhaustible range and musical curiosity paired with a flexible instrument of considerable size and an array of timbral colors. His recent career highlights include having prepared the roles of Britten’s Peter Grimes and Captain Vere in *Billy Budd* with the late Philip Langridge during the summer of 2009, one of the great interpreters of those roles. During the 2010-2011 season, Vickers bowed at Moscow’s International House of Music, premièring Alexander Zhurbin’s Fourth Symphony, “City of the Plague,” under Maestro Valery Polyansky with the Russian State Symphony Capella (scheduled for commercial release). Vickers also performed Zhurbin’s *Three Shakespeare Madrigals* in the Bolshoi Sal of Moscow’s Dom Aktor, accompanied by the composer. During the same season, Vickers continued his performance of Shakespeare settings performing on The Shakespeare Concerts series of Joseph Summer in Boston, with pianist Ian Watson and the Kalmia String Quartet. After the concerts, the artists entered Worcester’s Mechanics Hall to record various tracks that will be released on forthcoming albums (Albany Records and Parma Records). During the 2011-2012 season, Vickers returns to The Shakespeare Concerts in New England and the recording studio for further Shakespeare-inspired compositions, notably the major soliloquies of Summer’s *Hamlet*. Vickers is also recording Tippett’s *Songs for Ariel* for an album of musical settings from Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, accompanied by Ian Watson.

The Washington National Opera invited Vickers to cover Vittorio Grigolo’s *Gennaro* at the last minute for their 2008-2009 performances of *Lucrezia Borgia* opposite Renée Fleming, under the baton of Maestro Plácido Domingo, based on the success of his Opera Boston performances in 2006. For his Gennaro, Vickers was celebrated in the Boston Globe as “tall and swaggering, his singing sensitive and elegant… with a ringing tone!” Also, in 2008, the tenor portrayed the tragic Roméo in Gounod’s *Roméo et Juliette* for Illinois Opera Theatre. The tenor was fortunate to return to the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts for Illinois Opera Theatre’s performances of the revised version of Daniel Catán’s Spanish-language opera *La hija de Rappaccini*, with the conductor of its première Eduardo Diazmuñoz at the helm. Vickers shared the privilege of premièring the new aria “Beatriz, puerta del mundo,” which was composed for the production, with the young tenor Kyle Pollio. In 2005, Vickers made his international operatic debut at the Arbat Opera in Moscow, creating the title role of Italian painter Amedeo ‘Dedo’ Modigliani in the world premiere of Jerrold Morgulas’ *Anna and Dedo*. Moscow’s Musical Zhizny celebrated him as “a hero of the Russian stage” for his portrayal of Dedo, and the wife of the late Russian tenor Sergei Lemeshev exclaimed that she had “not witnessed a combination of such grand singing or passionate acting since Sergei stood onstage at the Bolshoi.” Vickers will reprise the role in future performances of the opera when it enters the repertory of The Pokrovsky Opera. The tenor maintains a close association with Morgulas, who composed the symphonic poem The Demon for Vickers, based on the Lermontov novella. Additional Moscow appearances have included concert appearances in Maskerad, as well as excerpts from the weighty role of Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*.

Vickers made his Carnegie Hall debut in November 1999 with Maestro Eve Queler and the Opera Orchestra of New York in the American première of *Donizetti’s Adelia*, singing the role of Comino. He made his Minnesota Opera debut in January 2000 singing the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Vickers returned to Carnegie Hall on Valentine’s Day of 2000 singing Rustighello alongside Renée Fleming and Marcello Giordani in *Lucrezia Borgia* (Vickers covered Giordani in the production). Of his Rustighello, Classical Singer wrote that Vickers possessed “a sweet, flexible voice and a lively, highly specific projection of the text that could set an excellent example for singers on this and other stages.” As an artist with Opera Orchestra of New York, he performed the leading tenor roles in Adelia and in *Lucrezia Borgia* for their Young Artist Performance series. He also performed on Opera Orchestra of New York’s Benefit Musicale, accompanied by Eve Queler at the piano, alongside Dmitri Hvorostovsky. Vickers made his international concert debut as Cassio in Verdi’s *Otello* with the Orquesta Sinfónica del Estado de México in March 2000, also under the baton of Maestro Queler. The summer of 2000 marked Vickers’ Merola Opera Program debut as Gabriel von Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, a role he subsequently performed across the nation with San Francisco Opera’s national touring company, the Western Opera Theatre. Vickers has also performed Eisenstein in a gala Christmastime performance of Die Fledermaus at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center with the National Chorale and for Opera Tampa under Maestro Anton Coppola.

During the fall of 2001, he made his debut with The Washington National Opera, covering the roles of Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* and Lennie in *Of Mice and Men*, while his debut role at The Kennedy Center was the Ballad Singer in the Floyd opera. Of his debut, The Washington Post reviewed that “as the Ballad Singer, Justin Vickers has a voice that stands out for its beauty.” He was again heard at Carnegie Hall in April 2001 with Opera Orchestra of New York as Tavannes in Meyerbeer’s *Les Huguenots*. His portrayal of Tavannes was cited as a standout in the lengthy opera and The New York Times regarded him as “a fine young tenor.” The tenor added the boisterous Italian, Alfred, to his repertoire for Connecticut Opera’s spring 2002 *Die Fledermaus*, under Maestro Willie Anthony Waters, to critical acclaim. He returned to Connecticut Opera to sing Narraboth in *Salome* in 2003. Vickers enjoyed his professional debut performing the title role in Idomeneo with the Wolf Trap Opera Company during the 1999 Festival Season. Opera News wrote, “As Idomeneo, tenor Justin Vickers displayed a well-molded voice, his clear diction and emotionally charged delivery in the recitatives establishing the character. From his first aria, ‘Vedrommi intorno,’ into Act II’s ‘Fuor del mar,’ Vickers offered distinct character development.” Also at Wolf Trap, Vickers performed Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, a role he has reprised for Opera Festival of New Jersey and the Hawaii Opera Theatre. His additional repertoire favorites include Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, which he performed opposite soprano Amanda Pabyan in New York City, as well as Rodolfo in *La bohème* and Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*.

Highly in demand for modern opera interpretations, he joined Encompass New Opera Theatre again at Symphony Space in June 2005 for a Gertrude Stein Trilogy showcasing the world première of William Banfield’s jazz-fusion opera *Gertrude Stein Invents a Jump Early On*, creating the role of Leo Stein; Ned Rorem’s *Three Sisters Who Are Not Sisters*, in which he essayed the mischievous Samuel; and Virgil Thomson’s *Capital Capitals*, taking on the verbose Capital II. The New York Times called Vickers’ interpretations in the Stein Trilogy “playfully operatic,” noting that his “crisp diction suddenly made whole lines of Stein’s patter start to make sense!” In 2004 he created the role of Tom Cobb for Encompass in the world première of Pulitzer Prize-nominated composer Seymour Barab’s *A Perfect Plan* at Symphony Space in New York City to riotous reviews! He was asked by Russian composer Alexander Zhurbin to interpret the role of Konstantin Treplev in the American première of *The Seagull* (an operetta based on Chekhov’s play) for the 2005 New York Musical Theatre Festival on Broadway under the direction of Lewis J. Stadlen and alongside the celebrated Broadway star Judith Blazer. Among his modern-opera roles, Vickers has recorded (Albany Records) and portrayed the title role of Mario in the professional premiere of Francis Thorne’s Mario and the Magician for the Center for Contemporary Opera in April 2005, for which The New York Times praised his “sweet and mellow tenor.”