

Maduka – Of the Sea

(Tapestry Opera/Obsidian Theatre World Premiere, 2023)

"It's also eminently singable and the all Black cast makes the most of it. Jorell Williams, as Maduka, sings powerfully and with beauty and is emotionally engaging." – **Opera Canada**

"Williams' outstanding vocal performance of Maduka begins demure, frightened by his new, sea-bound life, then evolves into fiery, driven arias with strong tessitura when his desire to escape becomes obsessive." – **Intermission Magazine**

"Of the Sea boasts an illustrious cast with some of the most beautiful voices I've ever heard. Jorell Williams stars as Maduka, a father who has been cast overboard of a slaving ship along with his infant daughter. Williams' voice seems to reverberate off of every corner of the theatre; his crisp, clear notes carrying with ease." – **A View From The Box**

"Maduka has found a perfect home inside the body of Jorell Williams. His powerful, clear tone, ease and flexibility of dynamics, and a remarkable capability for intense physicality brought this Father's heartbreaking yet inspiring story. I was particularly impressed as for the first possibly 30 minutes of the show (about one-third of the total running time), Williams sang his entire role until this point either lying down, kneeling, or writhing. All this in no way compromised the beauty of his tone or his immaculate diction. As someone who does a lot of physical movement in my work, this isn't easy and Williams was spectacular." – **Schmopera**

"Appearing in the principal role of Maduka, Queen Dfiza's most recent and, as events quickly prove, most reluctant inhabitant of her undersea dominion, baritone Jorell Williams turns in a performance of enormous energy and virtuosity. 'If I must be water, I will not be calm and blue!', he rages, his voice drenched with fury and frustration. An inexhaustible source of defiance in the face of crushing pressure to surrender his desperate hold on hope. Williams clearly understands the level of jeopardy in play here. An extraordinary characterization." – **Opera Going Toronto**

"The cast is exceptional. Williams has a clear, powerful baritone, a striking stage presence and dramatic depth..." – **Go Ahead Sumi**