

Issachah Savage, *tenor*

Dramatic tenor Issachah Savage is garnering acclaim as a “heldentenor par excellence” with “trumpet-like, clear, open-throated, powerful” singing (*San Francisco Examiner*). Praised for his “impressive natural instrument” (*Opera News*), Mr. Savage is the winner of the 2014 Seattle International Wagner Competition earning the main prize, audience favorite prize, orchestra favorite prize, and a special honor by Speight Jenkins.

In the 2015–2016 season, Issachah Savage makes his role debut in the title role of *Rienzi* with the National Philharmonic at Strathmore Hall. He also debuts at Austin Lyric Opera as Radames in *Aida* and with the San Antonio Symphony as Manrico in *Il trovatore* under Sebastian Lang-Lessing. He will also be seen in his first performance of Verdi’s *Otello* with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra in concert and will sing Verdi’s Requiem with the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

Mr. Savage made his Metropolitan Opera debut as Don Riccardo in Verdi’s *Ernani* under James Levine in the 2014–2015 season. He recently sang Siegmund in *Die Walküre* at the Canadian Opera Company under Johannes Debus to great critical acclaim and made his mainstage debut as Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Seattle Opera. He also debuted with Orchestre National de Bordeaux-Aquitaine under Paul Daniel in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 and at the Aspen Music Festival as Radames in *Aida* under conductor Robert Spano, a role he sang with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood under Jacques Lacombe in the summer of 2014.

In the 2013–2014, season, Issachah Savage made his Houston Grand Opera debut as Radames in *Aida* opposite Liudmyla Monastyrksa and Dolora Zajick, for which *Opera Warhorses* declared, “The performances of Monastyrksa and Savage were brilliant examples that Verdian voices continue to be produced.” He was also seen in concert with the Washington Chorus at the Kennedy Center singing Act 2 of Verdi’s *Aida*. In the summer of 2013, Mr. Savage participated in San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program for gifted young singers singing the finale to Wagner’s *Lohengrin* at the Merola Grand Finale concert. Writing of his performances of the last act of *Otello* in the Schwabacher Summer Concert series, the *San Francisco Chronicle* stated, “From his opening notes – impeccably shaded and coiled with repressed fury – to the opera’s final explosion of grief and shame, Savage sang with a combination of power and finesse that is rare to observe.”

Recent performances for the dramatic tenor include the world premiere of Wynton Marsalis’ *All Rise* with Kurt Masur and the New York Philharmonic, the world premiere of Leslie Savoy Burr’s *Egypt’s Night* with Philadelphia’s Opera North, with Marin Alsop and the Baltimore Symphony in Gershwin’s *Blue Monday*, and with the Opera Orchestra of New York alongside Elina Garanča in Massenet’s *La Navarraise*. He also made his role debut as Radames in *Aida* at North Carolina Opera.

With a sound that shines in Verdi and Wagner, Mr. Savage has participated in a number of programs designed for young artists with powerful voices including Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart Emerging Singers Program, Dolora Zajick’s Institute for Young Dramatic Voices where

he performed scenes from *Otello* and ACMA's Wagner Theater program where he performed scenes from *Die Walküre*, *Parsifal* and *Samson et Dalila*.

Acclaimed for a voice with both dramatic and lyrical qualities, Mr. Savage excels on the concert stage and has performed with many notable conductors and ensembles. In addition to those mentioned above, he has performed Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* with the Flint Symphony Orchestra, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle* with the New Dominion Chorale, Mendelsohn's *Elijah* with One Voice Chorale and Puccini's *Messa di Gloria* with Morgan State University.

In addition to his 2012 grand prize with the Marcello Giordani International Competition, Issachah has received a number of prestigious awards, recognition and career grants from institutions such as Wagner Societies of New York, Washington, D. C., and Northern California, Licia Albanese International Puccini Foundation, Olga Forrai Foundation, Gerda Lissner Foundation, Jensen Foundation Vocal Competition, Opera Index, and Giulio Gari Foundation. The tenor's special talents were recognized early on by the Marian Anderson Society of Philadelphia, where he honored as its very first Scholar Artist and then again in 2009 as a prize winner in their Classical Icon competition. He has received two first places prizes in the esteemed Liederkrantz Foundation competition, most recently in the 2012 Wagner Division and for General Opera in 2009.

Born into a musical and religious family in the Philadelphia area, Issachah vividly remembers his first public performance – in church at age 5. A last minute decision to audition for the Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Art (CAPA) secured him a place at the school and it was CAPA's choral director, David King, who first introduced him to opera through a recording of Jussi Björling singing "Ingemisco" from Verdi's *Requiem*. Mr. King went on to serve as an important mentor, encouraging the young artist to undertake rigorous vocal study and seriously consider a career as a professional singer. He possesses a Bachelor's Degree in Vocal Performance from Morgan State University and a Master's Degree in Opera Voice Performance from The Catholic University of America.

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