

Biography of Mr. Russell Saint John

Described as possessing ... "an assured, soothing baritone" by *The New York Times*, Russell Saint John's lyric voice and compelling interpretations of the solo, operatic and oratorical repertoire have brought him critical acclaim in the United States and Europe.

He has worked with some of the great conductors of our day including Zubin Mehta, Andrew Litton, Willie Waters, John DeMain, David Gilbert, Julius Williams and James Levine at the Metropolitan Opera. He has also been featured in recitals and as soloist with orchestra in many international music festivals including the Ruins of Pompeii Festival in Sicily and both the Bregenz and Salzburg Festivals in Austria.

His large repertoire is diverse, ranging from Lieder, Art Songs and Spirituals to the great oratorical and major concert works of Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Mendelssohn. Operatic roles include Valentin in "Faust" (Gounod), Di Luna in "Il Trovatore" (Verdi), Rodrigo in "Don Carlo" (Verdi) Amonasro in "Aida" (Verdi) and the title roles in "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" (Rossini) and "Porgy and Bess" (Gershwin).

A major exponent of new music, he actively performs the works of living composers and has given the world premières of "Death" by Luis Andrei Cobo, and "Spiritual Suite" by Tonia León, narrated by Levar Burton and the legendary Marion Anderson.

He has also been fortunate to have collaborated with Betty Allen, Richard Alston, and Grace Bumbry, and has performed with some of the most distinguished artists of our day including, Kathleen Battle and Jessye Norman.

Mr. Saint John is currently a Baritone soloist with the Fordham United Methodist Church Choir, Bronx, New York. In that capacity, he has served as the Baritone soloist on nine occasions for Fordham's annual Christmas performance of Part I of "The Messiah" (Handel). In 2008 he served as the Baritone soloist for Fordham's performance of Part III of "The Messiah". Mr. Saint John will serve as the Baritone soloist for Fordham's Sunday, March 28, 2010, 11am performance of Part II of "The Messiah" and for Fordham's Sunday, Dec. 12, 2010 afternoon performance of all three parts of "The Messiah".

Mr. Saint John's most recent concert was a solo recital at Fordham Church in tribute to Paul Robeson's famed October 29, 1927 Paris Concert of Negro Spirituals.