

Lester Lynch Baritone

Juilliard Opera School graduate and Ohio native, **Lester Lynch**, is recognized as one of his generation's most promising Verdi baritones. Hailed as having a voice that is "magnificently forceful" (The New York Times), he was applauded by Opera News for his *Rigoletto* which they called "a masterpiece of character delineation, heart wrenching in its depths of emotion, carefully pointing the text, yet with the vocal resources firmly in control, a rich baritone voice of great beauty and complexity."

During the current season, the baritone will sing DiLuna in *Il Trovatore* with the Kentucky Opera and the Nashville Opera, the title role of *Macbeth* with the Dayton Opera, Crown in *Porgy and Bess* with the Dallas Opera, and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. In concert, he sings Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Southwest Florida Symphony, and returns to the Kentucky Opera in the role of High Priest in a concert performance of *Samson and Delilah*. He will offer solo recitals at the Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center in Erie, Pennsylvania, and at the Florida Bach Festival under the auspices of the Marilyn Horne Foundation. Future seasons include performances with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Arizona Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, and the Atlanta Opera, among many others.

In the 2006-2007 season Mr. Lynch sang Crown in *Porgy and Bess* with the Opera Company of Philadelphia and the Los Angeles Opera, a performance which prompted MusicalAmerica.com to enthuse that "Lester Lynch invested the character with electric masculinity, and his robust boastings possessed undeniable appeal." In addition, he portrayed Tonio in *I Pagliacci* with Pittsburgh Opera and Lake George Opera, the title role of Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* with the Union Avenue Opera, and Germont in *Traviata* with Opera Cleveland. In concert, he sang Brahms' *Requiem* with the Washington Master Chorale at the Kennedy Center, *Carmina Burana* with the Omaha Symphony and the Houston Ballet, and had his debut with the Madison Opera in their popular Opera in the Park series. During the 2005 – 2006 season, Mr. Lynch sang Crown in *Porgy and Bess* with Washington National Opera, and also on a recording with the Nashville Symphony. He sang in the world premiere of Adolphus Hailstork's *Whitman's Journey* with the Washington Master Chorale at the Kennedy Center, *Carmina Burana* with the Cincinnati Symphony under Maestro James Conlon, *Messiah* with the Columbia Pro Cantare, Dvorak's *Te Deum* with the Dayton Symphony, and participated in a Gershwin Gala with the Grand Rapids Symphony.

Important company debuts include Marcello in *La Boheme* with New York City Opera, Germont in *La Traviata* with Houston Grand Opera, Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore* with Deutsche Oper am Rhein and Seattle Opera, Flint in *Billy Budd* with Canadian Opera Company, Alfio/Tonio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I Pagliacci* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the title role of *Rigoletto* with the Dayton Opera.

Additional highlights of his illustrious operatic career include his long association with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where he received critical acclaim for his performances of Calchas in *Le Belle Helene*, Marcello in *La Boheme*, and The Bartender in Conrad Susa's *Black River*. He sang Paolo in a new production of Simon *Boccanegra* with the Santa Fe Opera, the High Priest in *Samson and Delilah* with Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Michigan Opera Theater. He portrayed Amonasro in *Aida* with the Dayton Opera and Connecticut Opera, Marcello in *La Boheme* with Cincinnati Opera, Tonio in *I Pagliacci*, Count di Luna in *Trovatore*, and Amonasro in *Aida* all with the Dayton Opera, Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Nat Turner in *Vanqui* with Opera Columbus, and Escamillo in *Carmen* with the Shreveport Opera. He performed Crown in *Porgy and Bess* with the Houston Grand Opera on tour in Europe at Teatro alla Scala in Milan, and at L'Opera Bastille in Paris.

An accomplished concert artist, Mr. Lynch has performed a wide variety of repertoire with many important orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and Houston Symphony. He has sung both Crown and Jake in *Porgy and Bess*, with the Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and Ravinia Festival Orchestra, all with Bobby McFerrin conducting, and he performed in Placido Domingo's Operalia concert in Santa Domingo and the Dominican Republic with Eugene Kohn conducting. Additional concert highlights

include Copland's *Old American Songs* with the New World Symphony, Mendelssohn's *Die Erste Walpurgis Nacht* with the Grant Park Music Festival in Chicago, and Bach *Magnificat* with the Orchestra of St. Lukes at Carnegie Hall. He was Don Fernando in *Fidelio* with the Cincinnati Symphony, and sang Fauré's *Requiem* with the Duluth-Superior Orchestra, *Carmina Burana* with both the Fox Valley Symphony and the New York Oratorio Society at Carnegie Hall, *Elijah* with the Flagstaff Symphony, Brahms' *Requiem* with the Tucson Symphony, the premiere of *I Build a House* with the Columbia Pro Cantare, and Mussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death* with the Chautauqua Symphony. His performance of Amonasro in *Aida* with the Springfield Symphony was later broadcast on PBS.

A frequent recitalist, he has toured throughout the United States under the auspices of the Marilyn Horne Foundation. Of particular interest was a recital at Merkin Hall in New York where Mr. Lynch premiered a song cycle by Lowell Lieberman, which was commissioned for him by the Marilyn Horne Foundation. In addition, he offered a recital with pianist/composer John Musto at New York's Morgan Library, which was sponsored by the George London Foundation.

Mr. Lynch is the recipient of many distinguished awards, including the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the George London Vocal Competition, and the Sullivan Awards, and his work with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis earned him the prestigious Richard Gaddes Award.