

## Markel Reed, baritone

### Biography

Baritone Markel Reed “brings great articulate power and style” (*Broadway World*) to concert, recital and opera performances throughout the U.S., Canada and Europe. A passionate conveyor of the operatic repertoire, Reed has been cited for “delighting the crowd with his musical and dramatic expression” (*Upstage Post*) in both standard and contemporary repertoire. At the Metropolitan Opera, Reed performed with the ensemble in productions of Terence Blanchard’s *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* and sang in their 2019 GRAMMY® Award-winning production of *Porgy and Bess*. That same year, he created the role of Chester in *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* in its premiere at Opera Theatre of St. Louis.

The 2025-26 season features Mr. Reed in the roles of Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* with Washington Opera Society, Marcello in *La Bohème* with Portland Opera, his return to the role of James Baldwin in Sneed’s *The Tongue & The Lash* with Opera Theater of Saint Louis, a premiere with American Opera Projects as Ben/Postmaster in *The Post Office* and Thomas Eugene Mckeller in Damien Geter’s *American Apollo* with West Edge Opera.

In the 2024-25 season, Reed performed the roles of Masetto in Opera Omaha’s production of *Don Giovanni*, a guest performance of Henry “Box” Brown in Paul Moravec’s *Sanctuary Road* with UK Opera Theatre, Jigger Craigin in Boston Lyric Opera’s *Carousel*; and Yusef Salaam in Anthony Davis’ *The Central Park Five* with Detroit Opera.

Recently, *Opera Today* deemed Reed “a physical dynamo and a vocal delight” for his portrayal of Parson Alltalk in Joplin’s *Treemonisha* at Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and the *Boston Globe* said he “sang with magnetic swagger as the fighter in his prime” as Young Emile in Terence Blanchard’s *Champion* with Boston Lyric Opera. His other recent successes have included performing the roles of Figaro in Virginia Opera’s *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Joey in *The Time of Our Singing* with Theater St. Gallen in Switzerland, Marcello in *La bohème* with Opera Steamboat, and the roles of Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), John Sorel (*The Consul*), Dandini (*La Cenerentola*), Ruggiero (*La Liberazione di Ruggiero*), Count Pâris (*Roméo et Juliette*), Le Dancaïre (*Carmen*), and Kromov (*The Merry Widow*). In 2021 he sang in the premiere of Damien Sneed and Karen Chilton’s *The Tongue & The Lash* at Opera Theatre of St. Louis, where he portrayed “a





credible James Baldwin and sang through his argument with power and finesse" (St. Louis Post-Dispatch).

Reed's recent concert appearances have included singing as a Vassal in Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood; and as the baritone soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* with the Toledo Symphony, *Carmina Burana* with the Omaha Symphony, Handel's *Messiah* with the Utah Symphony, a holiday program with Steamboat Symphony. Markel made his Carnegie Hall debut performing the Bach's *Magnificat* and Margaret Bonds' *Ballad of the Brown King* with the Cecilia Chorus of New York. He performed in a concert of works by Shawn Okpebholo, including *Songs in Flight* and *Two Black Churches* with Arts DuPage in Chicago; and premiered Nkeiru Okoye's *Black Bottom* with the Detroit Symphony.

Reed's online credits include playing the role of Schaunard in a filmed version of *La Bohème*, a co-production from companies More Than Musical, Opera Columbus, Opera Omaha, and Tri-Cities Opera; Voodoo Man in Shirley Graham Du Bois's 1932 opera *Tom-Tom* livestreamed from the Caramoor Festival; Pat in David Wolfson's *Fortune's Children: A Zoom Opera* with Hartford Opera Theater; Papageno in "A Distant Flute" from The Lighthouse Opera Company, a scaled version of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*; and the title role in *Don Giovanni* with the Bronx Opera's "*BronxLive.*"

Reed has performed as a member of Utah Opera's Resident Artist Program, and has also sung with Kentucky Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Soo Theatre Project, National Music Festival, Opera Louisiane, dell'Arte Opera, Lyric Opera Studio Weimar, Utopia Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Harlem Opera Theater, and the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

A native of Charlotte, North Carolina, Markel Reed pursued his bachelor's degree in music performance at Oakwood University and is an alumnus of the University of Kentucky Opera Theatre program.