

RICHARD OLLARSABA, BASS-BARITONE



Mexican-American bass-baritone Richard Ollarsaba, praised by *The Washington Post* for his “meltingly smooth bass-baritone” and for “evoking a young Ruggero Raimondi in looks and manner”, represented the USA in the **2019 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World** competition, was a member of the prestigious Ryan Opera Center at **Lyric Opera of Chicago** for three seasons, and a grand finalist in the 2013 **Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions**.

This season he debuts with the **Glimmerglass Festival**, **Lyric Opera of Kansas City**, and **Portland Opera** as Escamillo in their respective productions of Bizet's *Carmen*. He will also debut with **Chicago Opera Theater** in the world-premiere opera *The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing* composed by Justine F. Chen, and will return to the role of the Count in *Le nozze di Figaro* with **Knoxville Opera**. On the concert stage, he will be seen as the bass soloist in performances of *Messiah* with the **Palm Beach Symphony**, *Pulcinella* with the **Salisbury Symphony** and returning to **The Master Chorale of South Florida** for performances of Verdi's *Requiem*.

Making several debuts in the 2021/22 season, he debuted with **New Zealand Opera** as Figaro in their national touring production of *Le nozze di Figaro*, **Opera Grand Rapids** and **Opera Carolina** in the title role of *Don Giovanni*, the **Jacksonville Symphony** in their performances of Puccini's *La bohème* in his role debut as Schaunard, the **Palm Beach Symphony** as the bass soloist in Mozart's *Requiem*, and returned to **Virginia Opera** as Count Almaviva in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*.

Recent season credits include a debut in the title role of *Don Giovanni* with **Opera Hong Kong**, the title role in *Le nozze di Figaro* with **Minnesota Opera**, Escamillo in *Carmen* with **Kentucky Opera**, **Minnesota Opera**, **North Carolina Opera**, **Tulsa Opera**, **Annapolis Opera**, and the **Bar Harbor Music Festival**. He has been a repeat featured soloist with the **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra**, notably in performances of Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* and Handel's *Messiah*.

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While at the Ryan Opera Center at **Lyric Opera of Chicago**, his tenure included productions of *La Traviata*, *Capriccio*, *Anna Bolena*, *Tosca*, *The Passenger*, *Otello*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Parsifal* and the title role in *Don Giovanni* – stepping into the iconic part with a few hours' notice. Other operatic engagements include Asdrubale in Rossini's *La pietra del paragone*, Fallito in Gassmann's *L'opera seria*, Angelotti in *Tosca*, and Luciano in Musto's *Bastianello* with **Wolf Trap Opera**; the title role in *Don Giovanni* with **Intermountain Opera Bozeman**; Timur in *Turandot* and Rochefort in *Anna Bolena* with **Minnesota Opera**; Ferrando in *Il trovatore* with **North Carolina Opera**, Colline in *La bohème* and Reverend John Hale in Ward's *The Crucible* with **Piedmont Opera**, Pistola in *Falstaff* with **Opera Omaha**, and Antonio in *Le nozze di Figaro* with **Opera Cleveland**.

In addition to performances on the operatic stage, Mr. Ollarsaba appears regularly in concert and recital. He has been the bass soloist with the **Mainly Mozart Festival** in a rare performance of Mozart's *Thamos, König in Ägypten*, Handel's *Messiah* with the **St. Paul Chamber Orchestra**, **Phoenix Symphony**, and **Kansas City Symphony**, Bach's *St. John's Passion* with the **Madison Bach Musicians**, Dvorak's *Te Deum* with **Apollo Chorus of Chicago**, Bernstein's *Songfest* at the **Ravinia Festival**, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the **Master Chorale of South Florida** and **Macon Symphony Orchestra**, Verdi's *Requiem* with the **Salisbury Symphony**, and Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* in his debut with the **Boston Symphony Orchestra** at Tanglewood. That concert was a gala celebration of the venerable festival's 75th birthday and was telecast nationally on **PBS**.

A native of Tempe, Arizona, Richard Ollarsaba received his Bachelor of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music and his Master of Music and post-graduate certificate from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. In addition to the Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago, he trained at Minnesota Opera, Music Academy of the West, Chautauqua Opera, Aspen Music Festival, Tanglewood, and Wolf Trap Opera.

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