

Blake Denson, Baritone

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Baritone Blake Denson, praised for his “captivating dramatic interpretations” with “a striking upper register “and “a sound that boomed to the back of the house” (Opera Wire), is a native of Paducah, Kentucky. Recently, Mr. Denson was named a Grand Finalist winner of the 2020 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. In the 2020-2021 season Mr. Denson is a Studio Artist in the prestigious Houston Grand Opera Studio where he will make his company debut in the Studio Scenes Showcase singing the roles of Don Giovanni, Ramiro from *L’heure espagnole*, and Dancaire from *Carmen*. Due to COVID-19, Mr. Denson was not able to make his company debut in the role of Morales in *Carmen*. Fortunately, he will also be performing with the company in the new Houston Grand Opera Digital 2020-2021 season. He will perform Father in *Hansel and Gretel*, cover the role of Daddy/Tim in the world premiere of *The Snowy Day*, be a feature soloist in the *Giving Voice Concert*, *Suite Espanola Concert*, and Church councilman in *Breaking the Waves*.

Mr. Denson's 2019-2020 season started with him returning to Rice University for his final year of his master’s program at the Shepherd School of Music. He competed and was named a second-place winner for the Houston Saegebund Vocal Competition. In the summer of 2019 Mr. Denson was a member of the Wolf Trap Opera Studio program where he covered the title role of Emperor Kaiser in *Emperor Kaiser der von Atlantis* and Pierrot in *L’île de Merlin*. He returned to Wolf Trap Opera for the 2020 summer season to perform as Captain in *Eugene Onegin*, covering Marcello in *La bohème*, and the title role of Onegin in *Eugene Onegin*.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 Mr. Denson was not able to perform these roles but did attend the Wolf Trap Opera 2020 summer and performed video recorded scenes from *Eugene Onegin*, *La bohème*, and *The Crucible*.

The 2018-2019 season included him earning his bachelor's degree in music performance from the University of Kentucky. While at the University of Kentucky he performed in productions such as Joe in *Show Boat* and Dottore Grenvil in *La traviata*. Mr. Denson also workshopped and starred in the world premiere of *Bounce the Basketball Opera* composed by the late Glen Roven. Shortly after graduating the University of Kentucky he participated in the Houston Grand Opera Young Artist Vocal Academy. Other highlights of the 2018-2019 season were his debut with the Shepherd School of Music Opera at Rice University. He performed in their production of *La Calisto* as Mercurio as well as Elder McLean in *Susannah*.

Currently, Mr. Denson resides in Houston, Texas, with his family. He is a proud Christian man that loves to spend time with his family. Mr. Denson is also a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. by way the EXalted Epsilon Chi chapter at the University of Kentucky. Mr. Denson uses his gifts and influence to present the same grace, love, and hope that was given to him through Jesus Christ. He is grateful and thankful for every one that has poured into his life.