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ASHRAF SEWAILAM BASS-BARITONE/DIRECTOR



The New York Times hailed Ashraf Sewailam's début at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall as a "stand out performance" and *Opera News* described his voice as "purring and velvety with an easily produced Ramfis-like top range with a majestic tone" and his stage presence as "strong, mysterious and with mesmerizing intensity." Last season, Mr. Sewailam made his house début with the Lyric Opera of Kansas City in one of his signature roles, Dr. Bartolo in ***Il barbiere di Siviglia***. He also returned to New Orleans Opera, this time as Dulcamara

in ***L'elisir d'amore***, and to Madison Opera as the Commendatore in ***Don Giovanni***. In the summer he returned to Central City Opera to as Bartolo in ***Il barbiere di Siviglia***. This season, he joins the Royal Opera House Muscat and the Hungarian State Opera as Samman in the world premiere of ***Sindbad***. He also joins Opera San Antonio to reprise Bartolo in ***Il barbiere di Siviglia***.

In addition to his success in the traditional lyric bass repertoire, he is recently being lauded by critics for his comedic timing and compelling performances in the difficult Rossini and buffo repertoire with role débuts as Bartolo in ***Il barbiere di Siviglia***, Mustafà in ***L'italiana in Algeri***, and Don Magnifico in ***La Cenerentola***. Of his performance in the title role of Rossini's rarely performed ***Maometto II***, critics raved that he "blustered and raged with impressive force," singing "unflappably, finding in Rossini's musical obstacles aspects of a fascinating character who is too often portrayed as an insipid villain." Recently, Mr. Sewailam joined the roster of the Lyric Opera of Chicago covering Sulpice in ***La fille du regiment*** and made his house début with Des Moines Metro Opera as Bartolo in ***Il barbiere di Siviglia***. He also returned to New Orleans Opera to sing Bartolo in ***Le nozze di Figaro***, Opera San José to sing Sparafucile in ***Rigoletto***, Seattle Opera to sing Bartolo in ***Il barbiere di Siviglia***, and Opera Memphis to sing Giove in ***La Calisto***. In concert, he was the bass soloist in ***Messiah*** with Pro Musica Colorado.

Sewailam performed the roles of Bartolo in ***Il barbiere di Siviglia*** with New Orleans Opera, Mustafa in ***L'italiana in Algeri*** with Tulsa Opera, Hakim/Driver in ***A Thousand Splendid Suns*** with Seattle Opera, and Ferrando in ***Il trovatore*** with Pittsburgh Opera. Additionally, he directed ***Otello*** at Central City Opera. In concert, Sewailam sang the bass solo in Beethoven's ***Symphony No. 9*** with the South Dakota Symphony. Recently, Sewailam made his mainstage Metropolitan Opera debut in ***The Magic Flute*** and joined their production of ***Ariadne auf Naxos***; he returned to Seattle Opera as Colline in ***La bohème***, joined Tulsa Opera for their production of ***Salome***, took on the title role in ***Maometto II*** for Washington Concert Opera, and rejoined Opera Carolina as Masetto in ***Don Giovanni***. As a director, he headed Opera Louisiane's ***Lucrezia*** and in concert, he was seen at the Denver Philharmonic Orchestra in their performances of Beethoven's ***Symphony No. 9*** and ***Choral Fantasy***. Engagements in 2020 were to include both ***Carmen*** and ***Les Contes d'Hoffmann*** at The Metropolitan Opera, Don Magnifico in ***La Cenerentola*** with Minnesota Opera, and Ramfis in ***Aida*** with Virginia Opera. In the summer of 2021, Ashraf joined Opera Steamboat as Basilio in ***Il barbiere di Siviglia*** and Dr. P in ***The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat***.



Previous engagements include the role of Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and Queequeg in *Moby Dick* with Opera San Jose, Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro* with San Diego Opera, Colline in *La bohème* with Austin Opera, Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with New Zealand Opera, the title role in *Ali Baba* with Opera Southwest, the role of Capitán in *Florencia en el Amazonas* with Madison Opera, Monterone in *Rigoletto* with Opera Grand Rapids, Toledo Opera, and Opera Carolina, Ligneire in *Cyrano* with Opera Carolina, Ramfis in *Aida* with Opera Rockies in Colorado Springs, a recording of *The 13th Child*, a new opera by Danish composer Poul Ruders, Die Sprecher in *Die Zauberflöte* with Central City Opera, and the pivotal role of Ferrando in *Il trovatore*, with critics exclaiming, "...When you add bass Ashraf Sewailam to the mix, this becomes even more special...and it needs someone of Sewailam's caliber."

In his début with New Zealand Opera as the assassin Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, he was described as "...hard to better, both vocally and dramatically." He subsequently returned to sing Alidoro in *La Cenerentola*, which he later performed for Queensland Opera. Ashraf made his United States début in 2004 with Opera Colorado performing the role of Leporello in *Don Giovanni*. Quickly becoming a house favorite, he subsequently returned to sing Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and The King of Egypt in *Aida*.

Mr. Sewailam made his New York City directorial debut directing a production of *The Cunning Little Vixen* with dell'Arte Opera Ensemble. Critics revered Mr. Sewailam's direction as "thoughtful" (*Voce di Meche*), yet "straightforward" (*New York Classical Review*) and praised the production as being "intriguing" and "well-sung" (*Opera News*).

Other engagements include appearances with the Boston Symphony as Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Colline in *La bohème*, Pistola in *Falstaff*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, and The Narrator in *Peter and the Wolf*; returns to San Diego Opera for Ramfis in *Aida*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, and Pizzetti's *Assassinio nella cattedrale*; the Pirate King in *The Pirates of Penzance* with Lyric Opera of San Diego; and an exciting co-production between Opera Carolina, Virginia Opera, Toledo Opera, Opera Grand Rapids, and Lyric Opera Baltimore of *Roméo et Juliette* as Capulet. Additional roles include Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* at Central City Opera; Angelotti in *Tosca* with Lyric Opera Baltimore; Pooh-Bah in *The Mikado* with Opera Memphis; Escamillo in *Carmen* and Queequeg in *Moby Dick* with Fargo-Moorhead Opera; Secret Police Agent in *The Consul* with Chautauqua Opera; Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* with Fresno Grand Opera; Ferrando in *Il trovatore* with Chautauqua Opera and Virginia Opera; Colline in *La bohème* with The Chattanooga Symphony and Opera; Dulcamara in *L'elisir d'amore* with Baton Rouge Opera; and a rousing performance as Beethoven/Commendatore in Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Steven Stucky's opera *The Classical Style* at Carnegie Hall, a role he originally created at Ojai Music Festival.

Mr. Sewailam's concert appearances include Orso Faledro in *La nave*, Uin-Sci in Leoni's *L'oracolo*, and Salomone in Montemezzi's *L'incantesimo* at Avery Fisher Hall; his Carnegie Hall début as the Bass soloist in Rutter's *Mass of the Children*; Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* with Colorado Mahlerfest; and the bass solo in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Phoenix Symphony. Additional concert engagements include Brahms's *Requiem* with Dubuque Symphony, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with Colorado Springs Philharmonic, Handel's *Messiah* with Cheyenne Symphony, a concert entitled *Eternal Spirit* with Boulder Bach Festival, and a recital with pianist Kenneth Osowski at York College. He also appeared numerous times with the Colorado Symphony, Boulder Bach Festival, and the Colorado Music Festival. His concert repertoire includes Bach's *Saint John's Passion*, *Magnificat*, *Christmas Oratorio*, and *Lutheran Masses in F and A*; Handel's *Messiah*; Haydn's *The Creation* and *Lord Nelson's Mass*; Mozart's *Requiem* and *Vespers*; and the



Verdi ***Requiem***. Mr. Sewailam also has a commercial recording on the Bridge label in which he performs ***Ten Songs from the Hebrew*** by Stefan Wolpe.

Mr. Sewailam began his career as a Cairo Opera Company house soloist, where he performed many roles including Dulcamara in ***L'elisir d'amore***, Gaudenzio in ***Il signor Bruschino***, Ramfis in ***Aida***, Palémon in ***Thaïs***, and Sparafucile in ***Rigoletto***. Mr. Sewailam was named a prize winner at the New Voices (Neue Stimmen) international competition in Gütersloh, Germany and was featured in the opening concert of the New Alexandria Library singing Beethoven's ***Symphony No. 9*** in Arabic. In addition to his singing engagements, Mr. Sewailam has taught at the American University in Cairo and served as music director for Disney Character Voice International (DCVI), dubbing Disney productions into Arabic and performing several of the characters. He earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Current as of August 30, 2025