

biography



GIDON SAKS – BASS-BARITONE

Gidon Saks was born in Israel and brought up in South Africa. He trained at the Royal Northern College of Music and at the University of Toronto. He was a member of the Ensemble of the Canadian Opera and later received a full scholarship to the Zurich Opera Studio.

A very engaging artist, Gidon charms the opera and concert stages over the world. Recent highlights include Hagen *Götterdämmerung* for La Fenice, Four Villains *Les contes d' Hoffmann* under Antonio Pappano at Covent Garden, Scarpia at Bregenz Festival, Bluebeard at the Concertgebouw under Peter Eotvos, in Nantes and for the opening of a new theatre in Angers, and Don Pizarro for Canadian Opera Company. His critically acclaimed performance as Claggart *Billy Budd* with the London Symphony Orchestra under Daniel Harding was also recorded by EMI / Virgin Classics, which just won a Grammy Award 2010 for Best Opera Recording. Previously he sang this role for Royal Opera House, Opéra National de Paris, Scottish Opera, Geneva and Antwerp.

Other opera highlights in Europe include Kaspar *Die Freischütz* and Don Pizarro *Fidelio* for Staatsoper Berlin, title role of Boito's *Mefistofele* for De Nederlandse Opera, Seneca *L'incoronazione di Poppea* for La Monnaie, title role *Don Giovanni* for Reisopera, Mefisto in Spohr's *Faust* in Vienna and Cologne, Filippo *Don Carlo* in Geneva and Palermo, Sparafucile *Rigoletto*, Ashby *La Fanciulla del West* and Cadmus/Somnus *Semele* for Vlaamse Opera. In the UK Gidon sang in *The Pilgrim's Progress* under the late Richard Hickox at the Royal Opera House, title role Boris Godunov, Kaspar, Nick Shadow *The Rake's Progress* and Hagen for English National Opera, Leporello, Achilles, Sarastro for Scottish Opera, Don Pizarro, Count *Figaro*, Daland and Kochubei *Mazeppa* for Welsh National Opera. While with the Canadian Opera Company Gidon has sung Rochefort *Anna Bolena* with Dame Joan Sutherland, Daland *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Wurm *Luisa Miller*, Bluebeard and Boris Godunov. For Washington National Opera he sang Fafner *Siegfried*, Hunding *Die Walküre*, Daland and Musiklehrer *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Other opera appearances include Wurm at Spoleto USA Festival and San Francisco Opera, König Heinrich *Lohengrin*, Fafner and Hagen *Der Ring des Nibelungen* in Seattle, Mephistopheles Gounod's *Faust* for Cape Town Opera, Colline *La Bohème* and Kecai *The Bartered Bride* for New Israeli Opera.

Gidon has created several roles including George Moscone in Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk* directed by Christopher Alden (Houston Grand Opera, New York City Opera and San Francisco Opera) which was also recorded for Teldec under Donald Runnicles, Hamilcar in Fénélon's *Salammô* (Bastille), and the Messenger in Goehr's *Arianna* (Royal Opera House).

Recordings include Abbot *Curlew River* (Philips) with Sir Neville Marriner, the Gravedigger in Weill's *Silbersee* (BMG), the title role in Handel's *Hercules* under Minkowski (Deutsche Grammophon) and *Saul* with Rene Jacobs, which won a Gramophone Award.

Gidon Saks is also active as a director/designer and is visiting Professor of Voice at the Conservatoire of Ghent in Belgium. He also frequently gives masterclasses internationally.

Future engagements include 4 Villains for Santa Fe Opera, König Heinrich *Lohengrin* with the CBSO, and Fernando *Fidelio* in concert with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra under Edo de Waart. In the forthcoming seasons he will also appear at Opéra Comique and return to Nantes, De Vlaamse Opera and La Fenice.

Gidon Saks is represented by Intermusica.

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