

James Ioelu

Bass-baritone



“highlights here were the resonant baritone of James Ioelu's Raimondo...so beautifully sung that some may have secretly wished for an immediate encore.”
The New Zealand Herald, 2014

“resonant and rhythmically secure”
Opera News, 2015

“a big-voiced bass-baritone from New Zealand...[who]...showed a well-projected voice, with good diction...a funny and convincing vocal and stage performance”
San Francisco Classical Voice, 2015

Based permanently in the UK, New Zealand bass-baritone James Ioelu begins the 2018-19 season as a member of the ensemble of artists collaborating for the English National Opera/Dutch National Opera/Metropolitan Opera co-production of *Porgy & Bess*; he appears in the production in London and Amsterdam. He returns to London for the ENO/Unicorn Theatre production in the title role (c) *Dido and Aeneas*.

Recent roles include his New Zealand appearance at Hamilton Festival in the principal role of King Potatau, the first Maori King, in the premiere of Janet Jennings' new opera, *Flowing Waters*. The artist spent the summer at Garsington Opera as a member of the Alvarez Young Artists' Programme, and in the role of Second Armed Man *Die Zauberflöte* and Pistola (c) *Falstaff* and went on for the ailing principal with exceptional results.

Past engagements include the roles of Abimelech/The Old Hebrew in Grimeborn Opera's production of *Samson et Dalila*, Colline in Iford Arts production of *La Boheme*, Innkeeper/Sergeant/Captain *Manon Lescaut* with the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Giordano Bellincampi, and the role of Jonas Fogg/Judge Turpin (cover) *Sweeney Todd* for New Zealand Opera. He sang with the NZ Barok Orchestra as King Thoas *Oreste* and added the role of Montano *Otello* with the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra alongside fellow New Zealander Simon O'Neill in the title role. The artist also appeared as Marchese d'Obigny/Barone Douphol (c) *La Traviata* (NZ Opera) conducted by Wyn Davies.

James Ioelu completed his training at London's National Opera Studio (2015/16); earlier, Mr Ioelu spent two seasons at Manhattan School of Music in New York where he sang Trinity Moses *Aufstieg Und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Mephistopheles *Faust* and Louis XVI *The Ghosts of Versailles*, winning a great deal of positive attention.

Back in New Zealand in 2014, the artist appeared in with the Auckland Opera Studio as Raimondo *Lucia di Lammermoor* for which he won outstanding reviews. He joined San Francisco Opera's Merola Program and sang the title role in *Don Pasquale* with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra winning great accolades from the notorious San Francisco classical press.

Past highlights include the role of Bruno in the world premiere of Michael Williams' original work *The Juniper Passion*, conducted by Marco Attura and directed by the librettist John G Davies, which premiered at Teatro Romano in Monte Casino before

touring to other Italian cities for performances in the Sapienza Theatre at the University of Rome and at the Museum Theatre in Nemi.

Mr Ioelu's other successes include the roles of Rodolfo *La Sonnambula*, Publio *La Clemenza di Tito* and Cesare *Giulio Cesare* as well as the role of Mother *Seven Deadly Sins*, all performed with the Auckland Chamber Orchestra. Concert appearances include Bass Solo/Adam (cover) in Haydn's *The Creation* under the baton of Nicholas McGegan conducting the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, and the Bass Soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with the Auckland Choral Society.

James Ioelu is originally from New Zealand where he completed a BA in Music and Psychology at the University of Auckland: his competition successes include winning the New Zealand Aria Competition, the New Zealand Young Performer of the Year award as well as placing second in both the Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngel Bel Canto Competition and the Sydney Eisteddford Aria Competition.

James enjoys the support and mentorship of Dame Kiri Te Kanawa who has taken a personal interest in his career, and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (UK). He is very grateful for her generosity and time.

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