

Ray Chenez

COUNTERTENOR



American countertenor Ray Chenez is redefining his fach with a voice that possesses a rare combination of beauty, power and flexibility. In addition to his frequent success in Baroque and Modern repertoire, he has impressed audiences in Mozart (Sesto in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*), Rossini (Berta in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), and even the Romantic repertoire (The Angel in Anton Rubinstein's *The Demon*). He is also known for his superb range as an actor, including his embodiment of diverse male and female roles.

Opera News magazine called him one of the up-and-coming opera stars of the next generation, writing, „*Ray Chenez's countertenor is bold and assertive, but also warm and luxurious. He has a natural electric presence, and his diction is precise no matter how high he sings.*“ A 2014 George London Award winner, he has been called „*luxury casting*“ by *The New York Times*, having „*excellent connection to the text, superb vocal control and impeccable diction*“ by *Opera News*, and a „*dramatic soprano voice bursting with potential*“ by *Opera Britannia*.

Upcoming engagements in the 2023-24 season include his Glyndebourne debut as Nireno in Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, Nerone in Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at Opéra de Rennes in the critically acclaimed production directed by Ted Huffman, and Icarus in *El Greco* by the living composer Giorgos Hatzinasios. On the concert stage, Ray

makes two important debuts at the Auditorium di Milano and the Duomo di Milano under the direction of Ruben Jais: Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *St. John Passion*.

In the 2022-23 Season, Ray made his notable role debut as Sesto in Mozarts *La Clemenza di Tito* with State Opera Plovdiv in the Roman theatre of Philippopolis. He revived Ruggiero in Handel's *Alcina* at Národní Divadlo Brno (CZ), and The Angel in Anton Rubinstein's *The Demon* at Staatstheater Nürnberg. Other role debuts included Ich in Kalitzke's *Captain Nemo's Library* in Vienna, and Oronte in *Talestri* at Staatstheater Nürnberg. On the concert stage, he made his Japanese debut in Tokyo in recital at the Bel Canto Opera Festival.

In the 2021-22 season, he made his role debut as Ruggiero in Handel's *Alcina* at the Národní Divadlo Brno (CZ) and Théâtre de Caen (FR). His debut in Italy was scheduled under the direction of Maestro Antonio Pappano and the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, where he was to sing the Mephistophile in Schnittke's *Faust cantata*. Other appearances included Apollo in Britten's *Death in Venice* in Vienna, Handel's *Belshazzar* in Heidelberg, and Hasse's oratorio *Petrus und Magdalena* at the Cologne Philharmonie.

In the complicated 2020-21 Covid 19 season, he managed to perform two productions with live audiences! - as Berta in a groundbreaking production of Rossini's *Il Barbiere*

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di Siviglia with the Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier; and as Ormondo in the rare opera *Argenore* by Wilhelmine von Bayreuth at Theater Münster. At the conclusion of the season, he returned to his native U.S. to sing two roles with Santa Fe Opera - the title role in the world premiere of the opera *Lord of Cries* by John Corigliano and Mark Adamo, and Oberon in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

In the 2019-20 season, he made his debut at the Opéra Comique in Paris in Cavalli's *Ercole Amante* as Il Paggio; made his role debut as Piacere in Handel's *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* with Concerto Köln; returned to the Opéra National de Bordeaux as Angel in Anton Rubinstein's *The Demon*, which was also scheduled at the Staatstheater Nuremberg (cancelled due to Covid-19); returned to the Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar as Kalden/Ty in the world premiere of Ludger Vollmer's opera *The Circle*; and made his solo concert debut in Halle (DE). His solo concert in Ankara (TR) was unfortunately cancelled due to Covid-19.

Female roles include Irina in *Try Sestry* by Peter Eötvos (Frankfurt Opera - 2018), the Witch of Endor in Handel's *Saul* (Theater an der Wien - 2018), Nutrice/Amore in Luigi Rossi's *Orfeo* (Nancy, Bordeaux, Caen, Versailles - 2016/2017) and Marzia in Vinci's *Catone in Utica* (Versailles, Wiesbaden, Bergen, Vienna, Bucharest 2014/2015).

Male roles include the title role in Handel's *Oreste* (Handel Festival Halle - 2018), Farinelli's role Sifare in Porpora's *Mitridate* (Schwetzingen/Theater Heidelberg - 2017), Nerone in Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* (Theater Bielefeld, Theater Aachen - 2017), Medarse in Hasse's *Siroe* (Markgräfliches Opernhaus Bayreuth - 2018), Teseo in Porpora's *Arianna in Nasso* (Theater an der Wien - 2017); Olinto in Hasse's *Demetrio* (Cadogan Hall, London - 2016), Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Pacific Opera Victoria - 2014, Nickel City Opera - 2015); Achille in Luigi Cherubini's *Ifigenia in Aulide* (Theater Würzburg - 2016); Narciso in *Agrippina* (Handel Festival Halle - 2019); and Hunahpú in Purcell's *The Indian Queen* (Genève, Cologne, Bremen, Dortmund - 2016).

His concert appearances include Carnegie Hall, Vienna Musikverein, Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Kölner Philharmonie, Konzerthaus Dortmund, Royal Festival Hall and others. He regularly collaborates with the world's finest conductors, including Christophe Rousset, Teodor Currentzis, Gianluca Capuano, Leonardo Garcia Alarcon Allarcon, Raphaël Pichon, Laurence Cummings, Vaclav Luks, Harry Bicket, and Dennis Russel Davies.

Ray Chenez can be seen and heard on the Naxos DVD of Cavalli's *Ercole Amante*, the Harmonia Mundi DVD of Luigi Rossi's *Orfeo*, and on the Oehms Classics CD of Peter Eötvos' *Try Sestry* from the Frankfurt Opera.