

JESSE BLUMBERG

BARITONE

Baritone Jesse Blumberg enjoys a busy schedule of opera, concerts, and recitals, performing repertoire from the Renaissance and Baroque to the 20th and 21st centuries. His performances have included the world premiere of *The Grapes of Wrath* at Minnesota Opera, Bernstein's *MASS* at London's Royal Festival Hall, various productions with Boston Early Music Festival, and featured roles with Atlanta Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Opera Atelier, and Boston Lyric Opera. Jesse has made concert appearances with American Bach Soloists, Boston Baroque, Apollo's Fire, Oratorio Society of New York, Montréal Baroque Festival, Arion Baroque, Early Music Vancouver, Pacific MusicWorks, and on Lincoln Center's *American Songbook* series. His recital highlights include appearances with the Marilyn Horne Foundation and New York Festival of Song, and performances of *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise* with pianist Martin Katz. Jesse has given the world premieres of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Green Sneakers*, Lisa Bielawa's *The Lay of the Love and Death*, Conrad Cummings' *Positions 1956*, and Tom Cipullo's *Excelsior*, and works closely with several other renowned composers as a member of the Mirror Visions Ensemble.



During the busy 2021-2022 season, Jesse returns to Handel & Haydn Society, Carmel Bach Festival, Boston Early Music Festival, Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Grand Rapids Symphony, and Mirror Visions Ensemble. In 2019-2020, he appeared with American Bach Soloists, Apollo's Fire, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Voices of Music, and Boston Early Music Festival, and made debuts with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the Nova Scotia Symphony, in addition to a number of solo recitals.

Notable recent operatic engagements include his role debut as Hawkins Fuller in *Fellow Travelers* at Boston Lyric Opera, William Burke in the world premiere of *The Nefarious, Immoral but Highly Profitable Enterprise of Mr. Burke & Mr. Hare* at Boston Lyric Opera, Oronte in Charpentier's *Medea* with Opera Atelier, *The Merry Widow* at Boston Lyric Opera, a European concert tour of *Niobe*, Charlie in Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers* in his debut with Atlanta Opera, and Anthony in *Sweeney Todd* with Hawaii Opera Theatre. Other operatic highlights include The Celebrant in Bernstein's *Mass* at London's Royal Festival Hall under the baton of Marin Alsop, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* and Mr. Lockwood in *Wuthering Heights* with Minnesota Opera, Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette* with Kentucky Opera, the title role of *The Return of Ulysses* with Opera Omnia, and the Count in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Fargo-Moorhead Opera.

Jesse has enjoyed a fruitful association with Boston Early Music Festival, in concert, opera, and recording. His roles with BEMF have included Adonis in *Venus and Adonis*, Mercurio in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Poliferno in *Niobe*, *Regina di Tebe*, Apollo and Pluton in *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers*, Tracollo in *Livietta e Tracollo*, and Léandre in *Le Carnaval de Venise*. He has been a frequent soloist with several other early music ensembles, including American Bach Soloists, Apollo's Fire, and Boston Baroque. Other recent engagements include appearances with the New York Festival of Song, and major works with the Oratorio Society of New York at Carnegie Hall. His other concert performances have included *St. Matthew Passion* with the St. Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, *St. John Passion* with American Bach Soloists, Boston Baroque, Apollo's Fire, and Berkshire Choral Festival, Bach's *B Minor Mass* with Portland Baroque Orchestra and Boston Baroque, *Messiah* with the National Cathedral, St. Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, American Bach Soloists, and Charlotte Symphony, and Bloch's *Sacred Service* at the Colorado Music Festival. As a member of the roster of the Marilyn Horne Foundation, Jesse performed an *On Wings of Song* recital with pianist Martin Katz, and since then they have partnered regularly in recital, especially in the major song cycles of Schubert. Their recording of *Winterreise* was released in 2016 via Blue Griffin Recording.

Jesse has been featured on over 20 recordings, including the 2015 Grammy-winning Charpentier Chamber Operas with BEMF. He was awarded Third Prize at the International Robert Schumann Competition in Zwickau, becoming its first American prizewinner in over 30 years. He took first prizes in the International Hilde Zadek Competition and the National Federation of Music Clubs Competition. He participated in young artist programs at Santa Fe Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, the Ravinia Festival, and Chicago Opera Theater and is the founding artistic director of Five Boroughs Music Festival in New York City.

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SELECTED REPERTOIRE

STAGED

Adamo	Little Women (John Brooke)
Bernstein	MASS (Celebrant)
Bizet	Dancaïro (c)
Blow	Venus & Adonis (Adonis)
Britten	Death in Venice (Hotel Waiter)
Campra	Le Carnaval de Venise (Léandre)
Charpentier	Actéon (Chasseur)
	Les Plaisirs de Versailles+ (Comus)
	Medée (Oronte)
	La Descente d'Orphée+ (Pluton, Apollo)
	La Couronne de Fleurs+ (Pan)
Cummings	Positions 1956 (The Groom)
Gordon	The Grapes of Wrath*+ (Connie, Tom (c))
	Green Sneakers*+
Gounod	Roméo et Juliette (Mercutio)
Grant	The Nefarious, Immoral but Highly Profitable Enterprise of Mr. Burke & Mr. Hare (Burke)
Heggie	Three Decembers (Charlie)
Lehár	The Merry Widow (Njegus, Danilo (c))
Leoncavallo	Pagliacci (Silvio)
Monteverdi	L'incoronazione di Poppea (Mercurio)
	The Return of Ulysses (Ulysses)
Mozart	Die Zauberflöte (Papageno)
	Le nozze di Figaro (Il Conte, Figaro)
Pergolesi	Livietta & Tracollo (Tracollo)
Portugal	The Marriage of Figaro (Figaro)
Purcell	Dido & Aeneas (Aeneas)
Rossini	Il barbiere di Siviglia (Figaro)
Steffani	Niobe, Regina di Tebe+ (Poliferno)
	Orlando Generoso (Atalante)
Sondheim	Sweeney Todd (Anthony)
R. Strauss	Ariadne auf Naxos (Harlekin)

*world premiere +recorded (c)cover

Suggested Operatic Repertoire

Britten	Billy Budd (Billy Budd)
Debussy	Pelléas et Mélisande (Pelléas)
Gluck	Iphigénie en Tauride (Orestes)
Heggie	Moby Dick (Starbuck)
Monteverdi	Orfeo (Orfeo)
Mozart	Così fan tutte (Guglielmo)
Puccini	La Bohème (Marcello, Schaunard)
Puts	Silent Night (Audebert)
Rossini	La Cenerentola (Dandini)
Strauss	Die Fledermaus (Eisenstein, Falke)

CONCERT *(extensive recital repertoire list available upon request)*

Adès	Totentanz (c)
Bach	St. John Passion+ St. Matthew Passion Magnificat Mass in B Minor Christmas Oratorio Cantatas: 11, 12, 18, 21, 22, 30, 32, 42, 45, 66, 76+, 79+, 80+, 82, 87, 96, 98, 101, 103, 105, 106, 109, 113, 130, 132, 135, 138, 140, 146, 150, 201, 203, 211, 213
Bloch	Sacred Service
Brahms	German Requiem
Britten	War Requiem
Durufié	Requiem
Eötvös	Senza sangue (c)
Fauré	Requiem
Finzi	In terra pax
Handel	Almira+ (Raymondo) Apollo & Dafne Dixit Dominus Judas Maccabeus Messiah Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne La Resurrezione Solomon Te Deum in D Major
Haydn	Lord Nelson Mass Paukenmesse
Kaminsky	As One (Hannah before)
Lang	The Little Match Girl Passion
Mahler	Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen Symphony No. 8
Monteverdi	Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda Vespers of 1610
Mozart	Requiem
Orff	Carmina Burana
Purcell	Birthday Ode for Queen Mary II Come, Ye Sons of Art Ode for St. Cecelia's Day
Reid	dreams of the new world+
Rosenmüller	Bass cantatas
Schmelzer	Le memorie dolorose+ (San Pietro)
Szymanowski	Stabat mater
Vaughan Williams	Dona nobis pacem
Walton	Belshazzar's Feast

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CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Boston Lyric Opera – Fellow Travelers

"Two finer men could not have been cast for the leading roles of the lovers, Hawk and "Skippy." Baritone Jesse Blumberg, as the super-confident Hawk Fuller. . . looked gorgeous and sang that way as well." *-Opera News*

"As Hawk, baritone Jesse Blumberg was delightful and immediately engaging: his dark, broad sound easily provided solid basis for a believable, seductive swagger. Blumberg's interpretation matures with his character: circumstance tempers his initial confidence and Blumberg effectively conveys the character's brooding interior life. Blumberg's sensitive turn in Hawk's final aria "Our very own home" was the dramatic highlight of the entire evening." *-Boston Musical Intelligencer*

"It helps that BLO had a stellar cast to bring this vocal writing to life. Jesse Blumberg brought a particular bravado and a warm baritone voice to Hawkins Fuller that made him absolutely magnetic to watch, and made it very easy to see what it was that Timothy sees in him even in the final scene after Hawkins betrays him." *-Schmopera*

"Baritone Jesse Blumberg is wonderful as Hawk, a man who seems assured in his own skin yet (as we learn) deeply conflicted about being gay to the point of destructiveness. Blumberg keeps the dramatic stakes high; despite his outward confidence as the easygoing charmer, he plays the restlessness beneath from the outset. He's especially compelling in his second-act aria of denial ("Our very own home"): "I'm not one of those," sung in a melancholy lower register over a deliberate, foreboding ostinato." *-Talkin' Broadway*

Boston Early Music Festival 2019 – Orlando Generoso

"Jesse Blumberg's Atalante proved appealingly versatile: sinister in his Act 1 appearances, elegant and suave in Act 2's "Che bella preda," and mining the Handelian brio of Act 3's "Mal concertate moli" with cool charm." *- Boston Classical Review*

Charlotte Master Chorale – Messiah

"From the moment we began to hear Blumberg's well-rounded low notes, I knew that he could rank among the best basses I've heard live in Messiah. . . the range, authority, and sheer beauty of Blumberg's singing were nonpareil. Coupled with Wilson's virtuosity, Blumberg's was the best "Trumpet Shall Sound" I've heard anytime, anywhere." *- Classical Voice North Carolina*

New York Festival of Song – Roberto Sierra: 33 Sueños

"The fifty-minute piece was a true test of endurance, yet Blumberg and pianist Leann Osterkamp stayed cool and maintained a focused energy through every tumultuous and tender movement. Blumberg's dramatic baritone was commanding and declamatory, with sensitive shifts in color that added a subdued drama in quieter moments." *- I Care If You Listen*

Saint Thomas Church / New York Baroque Incorporated – Messiah

"baritone Jesse Blumberg stole the show with his bass arias, strong yet deeply expressive and smartly modulated" *- The New York Times*

Boston Lyric Opera –The Nefarious, Immoral but Highly Profitable Enterprise of Mr. Burke & Mr. Hare

"The rest of the cast also contributed fine performances. Of these, Jesse Blumberg stood out as a conflicted, likeable, but ultimately murderous Burke." *- Opera News*

"Jesse Blumberg, as Burke, sang with smooth tone and a surprising touch of humanity. Though he is the one who actually committed most of the murders, Blumberg found a sort of hidden innocence in the character." *- Boston Classical Review*

Boston Early Music Festival 2017 – Livietta e Tracollo and Le carnaval de Venise

". . . when Blumberg was able to shed Strompetta's smock and sing with his "real" voice, his baritone was impressive, his mock-tragic aria just before intermission was particularly moving. . . Blumberg reminds us that there's genuine sentiment behind all the slapstick." *- Bachtrack*

"Jesse Blumberg's beautiful high notes and clear low range, along with highly nuanced and expressive delivery, made him an ideal choice for the role"
- *Boston Musical Intelligencer*

"Other singers doing significant double duty were Jesse Blumberg, as Isabelle's Léandre and, hilariously, the bumbling thief Tracollo"
- *The New York Times*

"Jesse Blumberg was a suave Leandre. His Act 2 serenade, which begins solo in French then shifts into Italian for a trio with his Venetian accompanists, "Luci belle dormite", was outstanding."
- *BachTrack.com*

American Bach Soloists – La Resurrezione

"Baritone Jesse Blumberg's Lucifer sounded both suave and demonic, with a liquid upper register and wondrously cavernous low notes"
- *San Francisco Chronicle*

New York Festival of Song – Gabriel Kahane: Six Packets of Oatmeal

"The premiere of Kahane's *Six Packets of Oatmeal* was sung by the excellent baritone Jesse Blumberg, whose charismatic performances are often a NYFOS highlight. Blumberg was superb, fully into the character of this unsettling series of songs."
- *New York Classical Review*

Music Before 1800 - Rosenmüller Cantatas with ACRONYM

"Blumberg and the group were a companionable pair. The baritone's transparent tone and precise articulation floated above and around the rich ensemble textures. His voice is bigger than is usually heard in early music performances, but his smooth phrasing and precise articulation and rhythmic alertness made for an ideal, intimate projection." - *New York Classical Review*

Winterreise – Recording with Martin Katz, piano (Blue Griffin Recording)

"As soon as I heard Blumberg's voice I was captivated by his excellent tone production and solid technique. He immediately establishes the story's somber mood with a stern tone. As the cycle progresses he demonstrates effective and imaginative use of dynamics and well chosen accent of notes and words. Most of all he shows a good storyteller's ability to set a grave tone that takes you through the unraveling of the wanderer's spirit as it leads to desolation...His attention to the text is as good as any singer's I've heard and it comes out clearly in his contrasting variation of tone from strophe to strophe. He has a good, sturdy, well-managed voice capable of fine nuance and brings the right affect to each song. This reading totally drew me in. It is one of the best of the 40 or so I've heard."
- *American Record Guide*

OnSite Opera – The Marriage of Figaro (Marcos Portugal)

"Baritone Jesse Blumberg, as Figaro, was a thoroughly charismatic presence every time he appeared"
- *Broadway World*

"The extensive experience of Michigan-trained baritone Jesse Blumberg as a Lieder singer showed in his soft-grained and elegantly sung Figaro."
- *Opera Today*

Boston Lyric Opera – The Merry Widow

"Of note in the comprimario roles was Jesse Blumberg as Njegus, the Pontevedran charge d'affaires (more or less Baron Zeta's butler). As World War I approached in the Boston Lyric's apocalyptic vision, Blumberg's Njegus came to embody Europe's willful ignorance, waltzing and singing in the empty dining room while gunshots rang offstage." - *Opera News*

Apollo's Fire – St. John Passion

"The role of Jesus in the Johannes-Passion is small but inevitably crucial; baritone Jesse Blumberg brought nobility to every word."
- *Opera News*

Mirror Visions Ensemble - Journeys

"Easily one of the finest concert and recital singers of our generation, Blumberg's contributions to the program were many-fold and his smooth legato phrasing, perfect diction, and beauty of tone never faltered." - *I Care if You Listen*

Hawaii Opera Theatre - Sweeney Todd

"Rachel Schutz as Johanna and Jesse Blumberg as Anthony bring much-needed light to the stage as the young lovers. Their glorious lyrical voices are captivating."
- *Honolulu Pulse*

St. Thomas Choir of Men and Boys - St. Matthew Passion

"His rendition of the work's glorious final aria, "Mache dich, mein Herze, rein", was simply gorgeous."

- *The New York Times*

Boston Baroque – St. John Passion

"Baritone Jesse Blumberg brought a robust presence to the role of Pontius Pilate, and he gave precision performances of his arias as well. His voice added weight to the dark chromatic melodies of "Betrachte, meine Seel," and he delivered an earth shaking rendition of "Eilt, ihr angefochtenen Seelen."

- *Boston Classical Review*

Boston Early Music Festival – Niobe, Regina di Tebe

"Equally extraordinary was tenor Colin Balzer and baritone Jesse Blumberg -what a most beautiful voice! What management! What dramatic coloratura commitment- A real discovery!"

- *El arte de la fuga*

Boston Baroque – Messiah

" Baritone Jesse Blumberg sang in a voice best described as "handsome"—unforced, not an ounce of bark or woof in it, just a clear, manly sound that should get the singer a few dates."

- *Boston Classical Review*

Boston Early Music Festival - Chamber Opera Series Gala

"Jesse Blumberg sang Adonis with an appealing mix of freedom and control."

- *The Boston Globe*

Opera Omnia – The Return of Ulysses

"Jesse Blumberg was compelling as Ulysses, throwing himself in the role physically as well as vocally."

- *The New York Times*

American Bach Soloists – Handel: Messiah

"there was no beating Part Three's "The Trumpet shall sound," which baritone Jesse Blumberg delivered like a leaping proclamation of Judgment Day."

- *Mercury News*

Oratorio Society of New York – Britten: War Requiem

"The Owen poems were sung with a blend of poignancy and grim honesty by the warm lyric tenor John Matthew Myers and the expressive baritone Jesse Blumberg"

- *The New York Times*

New York City Opera – VOX 2012

"Kathryn Guthrie, a soprano, and Jesse Blumberg, a baritone, fearlessly tore into the operatic equivalent of Meg Ryan's orgasm scene in "When Harry Met Sally," aided by a witty score that drew on an accordion, a kitchen wok and lewd brass solos."

- *The New York Times*

Pacific MusicWorks – Bach Cantatas

"Tenor Colin Balzer and baritone Jesse Blumberg sang through the evening with superbly focused tone and an impeccable sense of style."

- *Seen & Heard International*

Collaborative Works Festival – Schubert: Winterreise

"His deep understanding of what makes "Winterreise" the supreme challenge of a *lieder* singer's art came through in his caring and musicianly performance...His interpretation clearly was the result of serious, detailed study."

- *Chicago Tribune*

Boston Early Music Festival – Niobe, Regina di Tebe

"Jesse Blumberg sung the avenging magician Poliferno's outbursts with commanding ease."

- *City Journal*

Minnesota Opera – Wuthering Heights

"One of America's great young baritones"

- *Opera Today*

New York Festival of Song - Manning the Canon

"Blumberg brought soulful lyricism to Tchaikovsky's "At the Ball."

- *Opera News*

Southbank Centre, London – Bernstein MASS at Royal Festival Hall

"Jesse Blumberg made a touchingly vulnerable Celebrant."

- *Financial Times*

“Alsop, a pupil of Bernstein...was helped by an outstanding young baritone soloist, Jesse Blumberg, who turned the Celebrant’s loss of faith into an entirely believable mental breakdown rather than a piece of ideological grandstanding.”
- *Daily Telegraph*

Boston Lyric Opera – Strauss: *Ariadne auf Naxos*

“Through excellent diction and a measured portrayal, Blumberg brought forth a reality wherein clowns and princesses might chat over coffee.”
- *Boston Musical Intelligencer*

Kerrytown Concert House – Schubert: *Die schöne Müllerin*

“... the stars aligned perfectly for Schubert, and for the song cycle itself, which received a vivid, finely paced reading from baritone Jesse Blumberg and pianist Martin Katz.”
- *AnnArbor.com*

Vail Valley Music Festival – World Premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon’s *Green Sneakers*

“Blumberg at the premiere made this story his own, singing with a richly nuanced voice and, at 29, the stage presence of a veteran actor.”
- *Opera Today*

American Bach Soloists - Bach: *Christmas Oratorio*

“Blumberg’s rich, refined sound gave touching poignancy to “Erleucht auch meine finstre Sinnen.”
- *San Francisco Classical Voice*

Opera Vivente - Monteverdi: *The Return of Ulysses to His Homeland*

“In the title role, Jesse Blumberg commanded the stage, physically and vocally. His virile baritone grabbed the melodic lines with remarkable dynamic force, lighting up the hall with his every appearance.”
- *The Baltimore Sun*

Minnesota Opera – World Premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon’s *The Grapes of Wrath*

“As Connie, who abandons her, Jesse Blumberg used his strong baritone to make the most of the pathos.”
- *Seen & Heard International*