



NICHOLAS NEWTON, Bass-Baritone

Hailed for his "polished vocal technique" and "heart-tugging emotional communication" (*San Diego Story*), Nicholas Newton consistently garners due attention as a dynamic and compelling bass-baritone in the classical music world. In the 2026-27 season, Nicholas returns to the stage of The Metropolitan Opera, bowing as The Speaker in the family-friendly Julie Taymor production of *The Magic Flute*, and makes a role debut as Colline in *La bohème* with Opera Omaha. Furthermore, he celebrates a title role debut in *Le nozze di Figaro* at San Diego Opera, and performs in Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* with Stéphane Denève and the New World Symphony, and separately with Denève and the Saint Louis Symphony.

As the Kirsten Flagstad Award winner of the 2026 George and Nora London Foundation competition, Nicholas made his Metropolitan Opera debut in the 2025-26 season in Rolando Villazón's acclaimed production of *La Sonnambula* conducted by Riccardo Frizza and return engagements of the season included the world premiere of Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winning writer, Michael R. Jackson's first opera entitled *Complications in Sue* at Opera Philadelphia, the American operatic premiere at Houston Grand Opera of Robert Wilson's mesmerizing vision of the beloved *Messiah* (composed by Handel and arranged by Mozart), audience-favorite *Romeo and Juliet* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* at the Salzburg Festival with Utopia led by Teodor Currentzis. A vibrant concert schedule included performances of *Messiah* with Jonathan Cohen and the Handel & Haydn Society and a Kennedy Center recital debut as the 2025 Winner of the Marian Anderson Vocal Award – an award recognizing a young American singer in opera, oratorio, or recital repertory and given annually offering its winner a cash prize – a residency at Washington's Duke Ellington School of the Arts, and a solo recital presented by Washington National Opera.

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Highlights of past opera seasons include a praised debut at the Opéra national de Paris in *Castor et Pollux* in a new production directed by Peter Sellars, a debut at Lyric Opera of Chicago in *Le nozze di Figaro* directed by Barbara Gaines led by Erina Yashima, and new productions of *Don Giovanni* at Santa Fe Opera and Opera Philadelphia. Additional credits on leading international stages include a European debut at the Salzburg Festival in Purcell's *The Indian Queen* with Teodor Currentzis conducting *Utopia*, Rossini's comic masterpiece *La cenerentola* and Richard Jones' acclaimed production of *Hänsel und Gretel* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at Cincinnati Opera and Santa Fe Opera, John Adams' *El Niño* and Handel's *Rodelinda* at the Metropolitan Opera, *Xerxes* at Detroit Opera, and the world premiere of Gregory Spears and Tracy K. Smith's *The Righteous* at Santa Fe Opera.

At Houston Grand Opera, which the artist considers his 'home company,' Nicholas has bowed in the world premieres of *Intelligence*, a new American epic created by a powerhouse trio: composer Jake Heggie, librettist Gene Scheer, and director/choreographer Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Joel Thompson and Andrea Davis Pinkney's *The Snowy Day*, and Damien Sneed and Deborah D.E.E.P. Mouton's *Marian Song*. The company won the GRAMMY Award for Best Opera Recording for the HGO-commissioned opera *Intelligence*, recorded live during the opera's world premiere run at the Wortham Theater Center in fall 2023 and released in August 2025, and the recording preserves a masterful performance from a celebrated cast and the HGO Orchestra led by Kwamé Ryan. The bass-baritone also has worked on many other productions there including Barrie Kosky's acclaimed vision of Handel's *Saul* and repertoire performances of *Roméo et Juliette*, *Rigoletto*, *Salome*, and *Tosca*.

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An avid concert performer and recitalist, Nicholas has garnered success in Handel's *Messiah* with the Ann Arbor Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, and the Rhode Island Philharmonic as well as in tour performances of Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* in a new suite of music from the composer's historic opera, performed with the celebrated trumpeter, his E-Collective, and the Grammy Award-winning Turtle Island. Nicholas is an alumnus of Ravinia's Steans Music Institute and has toured with renowned pianist, Kevin Murphy, performing at the Tucson Desert Song Festival. He also has worked with the Cincinnati Song Initiative and performed in their virtual recital series: A World of Song, and appeared in Houston Grand Opera's Giving Voice: Lawrence Brownlee & Friends concert. Other notable concert performances include Mozart's Requiem, Haydn's Lord Nelson Mass, Fauré's Requiem, Stephen Paulus' *To Be Certain of the Dawn*, Gershwin's *Catfish Row* with San Diego Winds, Duruflé's Requiem with San Diego Master Chorale, and the world premiere of Michael Capp's *Christmas Revels* with Las Colinas Symphony.

In addition to his burgeoning profile on international opera and concert stages, Nicholas is an independent researcher whose main focus is Black composers and their operatic and vocal concert repertoire. He is also the founder of the Black Opera Database; a 501(c)(3) non profit dedicated to archiving, showcasing, and contextualizing operas created by and about people of the African Diaspora. He conducts most of his in-person research in New York at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and in Chicago at the Center for Black Music Research at Columbia College Chicago. These two centers have provided him the opportunity to research the music of Black composers in great detail through the access of Special Collections, Microfilms, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Books. Nicholas is an affiliate with the Black Opera Research Network which was founded by the David G. Frey Distinguished Professor in Music at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Dr. Naomi André. Dr. André is today's foremost scholar of Black opera, specializing in research on opera and issues surrounding gender, voice, and race. He has delivered multiple lectures on Black opera composers while under the tutelage of composer, former Fulbright Scholar and Guggenheim Fellow, and 2023 American Academy of Arts and Letters Walter Hinrichsen Prize in Music winner Dr. Shih Hui Chen.

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A proud alumnus of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, Nicholas has received extensive training through several prestigious young artist programs. He was a Studio Artist and Filene Artist with Wolf Trap Opera, a Young Artist at the Aspen Music Festival, and a participant in Houston Grand Opera's Young Artists Vocal Academy. Additionally, he trained with San Diego Opera's Opera Exposed program. The winner of a 2026 George London Award given by the George and Nora London Foundation as well as a 2021 Sullivan Award-winner, he earned his Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from San Diego State University studying with Laurinda Nikkel and his Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Rice University under the tutelage of Dr. Stephen King.

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