

# Thomas Hampson

## Bariton

Thomas Hampson enjoys a singular international career as a recitalist, opera singer, and recording artist, and maintains an active interest in teaching, research, and technology. The American baritone has performed in all of the world's most important concert halls and opera houses with many renowned singers, pianists, conductors, and orchestras. Praised by the *New York Times* for his "ceaseless curiosity," he is one of the most respected, innovative, and sought-after soloists performing today.

Hampson has won worldwide recognition for his thoughtfully researched and creatively constructed programs that explore the rich repertoire of song in a wide range of styles, languages, and periods. He is one of the most important interpreters of German Romantic song, and with his celebrated "Song of America" project ([www.songofamerica.net](http://www.songofamerica.net)), a collaboration with the Library of Congress, has become the "ambassador" of American song. Through the Hampsong Foundation, founded in 2003, he employs the art of song to promote intercultural dialogue and understanding.

Hampson begins his 2011-12 season at San Francisco Opera, where he will create the role of Rick Rescorla in the world premiere of Christopher Theofanidis's *Heart of a Soldier*. The new opera, commemorating the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, features a libretto by Donna Di Novelli and is directed by Francesca Zambello. Based on the 2002 book by James B. Stewart, the work is inspired by the true story of Rescorla, his wife, Susan, and his friend Daniel J. Hill, culminating in Rescorla's tragic death in the collapse of the South Tower of the World Trade Center following his heroic evacuation of all 2,700 employees of Morgan Stanley. Hampson's other operatic engagements this season include Iago in Verdi's *Otello* and the title role in Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler*, both at Zurich Opera, and Verdi's *Macbeth* at New York's Metropolitan Opera.

Among other season highlights for Hampson are the opening night gala concert with Christoph Eschenbach and the National Symphony Orchestra, marking two anniversaries: the orchestra's 80th and the Kennedy Center's 40th; Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Munich Philharmonic and Zubin Mehta; *Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel; Brahms's Requiem and Dvořák's *Biblical Songs* with the Pittsburgh Symphony and Manfred Honeck; and recitals in the U.S., Spain, Germany, Switzerland and Austria (Vienna's Musikverein), including "Song of America" programs in New York and Cologne. The 2011-12 season will also see the debut of the syndicated "Song of America" radio series, co-produced by the Hampsong Foundation and the WFMT Radio Network of Chicago for release in October. Hosted by Hampson, the series will consist of 13 one-hour programs exploring the history of American culture through song, bringing the "Song of America" project to a national audience of radio listeners.

Hampson's 2010-11 season was dominated by performances celebrating the 150th anniversary of Gustav Mahler's birth and the 100th anniversary of his death. Recognized as today's leading interpreter of the Austrian composer's songs, the baritone began the worldwide celebrations on July 7, 2010 – Mahler's 150th birthday – in Kaliste, Czech Republic, with a recital from the composer's birth house, streamed live on medici.tv, as well as an internationally televised orchestral concert, available on DVD. Throughout the season he performed Mahler with orchestras including the Vienna Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic, the North German Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra, and the Czech Philharmonic with conductors such as Alan Gilbert, Mariss Jansons, Philippe Jordan, and Antonio Pappano. Hampson also featured the composer's songs in recitals in Munich, Paris, Amsterdam, Brussels, Zurich, Milan and Oslo, and presented the complete songs as "Mahler Artist-in-Residence" at Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie. His new recording of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* with the Wiener Virtuosen – a conductorless ensemble comprising principal players of the Vienna Philharmonic – was widely acclaimed.

Additional highlights of Hampson's 2010-11 season included season-opening performances in the title role of a new production of Verdi's *Macbeth* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; three all-Strauss concerts with Renée Fleming and the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Christian Thielemann; selections from George Crumb's *American Songbooks*, with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center; "Song of America" recitals at Duke University and Minnesota Beethoven Festival; and the world premiere of William Bolcom's *Laura Sonnets*, written especially for him. In Switzerland, he performed at Zurich Opera in new productions of Verdi's *I Masnadieri* and Wagner's *Parsifal* under Adam Fischer and Daniele Gatti, and appeared in a series of opera galas. In March 2011 he oversaw the inaugural season of the Heidelberg Lied Academy, of which he is artistic director; the academy is part of the Heidelberger Frühling music festival and trains young singers in text-based song interpretation.

Raised in Spokane, Washington, Hampson has received many honors and awards for his probing artistry and cultural leadership. His discography of more than 150 albums includes winners of a Grammy Award, two Edison Prizes, and the Grand Prix du Disque. He holds honorary doctorates from Manhattan School of Music, Whitworth College (WA), and the San Francisco Conservatory, and is an honorary member of London's Royal Academy of Music. In the 2009-10 season he served as the New York Philharmonic's first artist in residence, and in 2011 he received the Concertgebouw Prize. He carries the titles of Kammersänger of the Vienna State Opera and the Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the Republic of France, and was awarded the Austrian Medal of Honor in Arts and Sciences in 2004. He is the 2009 Distinguished Artistic Leadership Award recipient from the Atlantic Council in Washington, DC, and in 2008 was named Special Advisor to the Study and Performance of Music in America by Dr. James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress. In 2010, Hampson was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

For more information please visit [www.thomashampson.com](http://www.thomashampson.com).

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