

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Leyerle, who has performed as principal baritone soloist in Germany, Switzerland, and Denmark, and in major cities on the West Coast and in New York, has also been active as a performer in Lieder recitals and oratorio. He taught studio and class voice and vocal literature at the State University of New York, College of the Arts and Science at Geneseo for thirty-three years before retiring in 2008. While teaching at Geneseo, he received the Chancellor of the State University's Excellence in Teaching Award.

Mr. Leyerle's first book has its roots in his first voice lesson, at the age of fourteen, in the small cotton and soya bean farming community of Cardwell, Missouri. His teacher was Jane Rauls Washington. The interest generated by Mrs. Washington led to undergraduate study in music with J. Clyde (Doc) Brandt at Southeast Missouri State University and graduate study in voice at Millikin University at Decatur, Illinois, with Hubert Norville. Next, he did post graduate study at the University of Illinois with Ludwig Zirner, Paul Ulanowsky, Eric Dalheim and William Miller. In addition, he did other post graduate work at the famed Akademie für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Vienna, where he studied voice privately with Baron Hans Karg-Bebenburg.

Interspersed with formal institutional study, he continued in private study with Hazel Arth in Washington, D.C., Ivan Rassmussen in Tacoma, Washington, Farrold Stephens in San Diego, Mario Chamlee in Hollywood, Enzo Mascherini in Zurich, and in New York City with Armen Boyajian, Oren Brown, Lili Wexberg, and Carmine Gagliardi.

Other preparation includes coaching with George Trovillo, Hans Willi Häuslein, Otto Guth, Kurt Adler, and Thomas Martin. He has also worked with stage directors, Matthew Farruggio, William Adams, William Ball, Alfred Schönolt, Frank Corsaro, Lotfi Monsouri, Michael Hampe, James Lucas, and Henry Butler.

Although Mr. Leyerle sang for nine years as a tenor, his professional career did not start moving until he converted to baritone, on the advice of Mario Chamlee. While he was a tenor, he was a finalist in two Metropolitan Opera Regional Final Auditions in Chicago and Los Angeles (the latter, for which he received an honorable Mention and a financial scholarship from the Metropolitan Opera Studio). He also won a San Francisco Opera Regional Final Audition in San Diego and participated two summers in the San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program - the first summer in 1963 as a tenor and the second in 1967 as a baritone.

After changing to baritone, he participated for one year at the Zurich Opera's International Opera Studio in Switzerland, during which time he was awarded a grant from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music, Inc., after an audition in Munich, Germany. This grant enabled him to make an audition tour in Germany, where he secured his first full-time European opera engagement in Flensburg, Germany.

Interspersed throughout most of his years of study and performance, Mr. Leyerle has been active as a vocal or instrumental music teacher from first grade through the college level in the states of Missouri, Illinois, California, and New York. He served two years as State Chairman in Voice for the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) and has given numerous voice clinics and workshops throughout the state.

He is a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (during four years of which he was Vice-President in charge of Membership); and Pi Kappa Lambda. He has been a member of Actors Equity Association and the American Guild of Musical Artists.

After writing this book and editing a number of song anthologies with his wife, Anne, he established his publishing company, LEYERLE PUBLICATIONS, which currently lists over one hundred volumes, including opera libretti by Nico Castel and Anton Belov, classical song texts by Beaumont Glass, Martha Gerhart, and many others.

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