

Richard Woods

Bass-baritone Richard Woods is a native of Fresno. He began performing at an early age as a member of Roger Rocka's Junior Company Players with former Roosevelt graduates Audra McDonald and Joel Ables.

While at Fresno State, he discovered a love for opera and with the urging of the late Larry Stayer of the Metropolitan Opera's Young Artist Program came to New York City to audition for several conservatories. Though offered a full scholarship to the Manhattan School of Music, Richard instead chose The Juilliard School of Music at Lincoln Center where he became the youngest person to ever be accepted into the J.O.C. (Juilliard Opera Center) at 21.

Soon Mr. Woods was noticed by New York City Opera where he made his professional debut in *Tosca* at 23. Mr. Woods eventually was hired full time by the company and served as house bass-baritone where he went on to perform numerous roles throughout the nineties. He spent his summers in the top apprentice programs including Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, Wolf Trap Opera Company in Vienna, and two tours with the Merola Program's Western Opera Theater in San Francisco. Richard has won several awards including the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions at both the district and regional levels, and the Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition.

Throughout his early career Richard has had the opportunity to study extensively with Marlena Malas, Frank Corsaro, Nico Castel, Thomas Grubb, Giorgio Totsi, Luciano Pavarotti, Barbara Cook, Marylyn Horne, and many other amazing coaches, conductors, directors, and singers.

In the midst of his budding operatic career, Richard decided that being away from his wife and two young sons was too great a sacrifice to make for all involved. Mr. Woods decided a career in music education was the best way to utilize his vast music and performance experience. Relocating his family back home to Fresno, Richard took over duties as Vocal Music Director for Roosevelt School of the Arts. Mr. Woods' students have already received straight Superior ratings for vocal performance in their first festival of the year.

Richard performs regularly with the Fresno Grand Opera Company and recently received rave reviews as The Bonze in *Madam Butterfly*. Mr. Woods has performed throughout the world, and is thrilled to have the opportunity to help prepare Roosevelt's talented students for their turn at a successful career in music.