

## FACULTY PROFILE



## Ralph Klapis, Baritone

### Adjunct Instructor

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### Biography

Baritone Ralph Klapis began his career in Kansas City, Missouri, where he sang with the Lyric Opera for seven seasons. After an apprenticeship at the Santa Fe Opera, he began an operatic career that took him from San Francisco's Western Opera Theater to the Tulsa Opera, Chattanooga Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Peoria Civic Opera, Opera Grand Rapids, and Virginia Opera Theater, and many points in between. He has performed comic bass roles such as Leporello, Don Pasquale, Don Alfonso, and Figaro, as well as baritone roles, including Marcello, Gianni Schicchi, the Elder Germont, Scarpia, the Conte di Luna, and Amonasro.

He has also appeared with the Kansas City Philharmonic, the Dallas and Denver Symphonies, the South Bend Symphony and Midwest Pops, and numerous other orchestras, in works ranging from songs by Cole Porter and Aaron Copland to Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and the *Verdi Requiem*. In 2001 he sang Christus in VU's performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, and in 2007 sang the same role in the *St. John Passion*. Also in 2007, he created the role of Herod in the world premiere of Dennis Friesen-Carper's *Innocents: a War Oratorio*.

While he continues to perform on the concert and operatic stage (most recently as Sam in Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* at the Maud Powell Festival

in Peru, Illinois), he has always maintained an active presence as a recitalist. He has performed all three of Schubert's song cycles, as well as cycles of Schumann, Brahms, Poulenc, and Ravel. He has appeared in recital at the University of Notre Dame, the University of Illinois, Andrews University, Kalamazoo College, and at the Toledo Art Museum, the Castle Concert Series in Indianapolis, the Rocky River Chamber Music Series in Cleveland, and on WFMT's Dame Myra Hess series in Chicago. In recent years, he has collaborated with his colleague Joseph Bognar on recitals of music old and new, including music by Mozart, Schubert, Hugo Wolf, Theodore Chanler, Dimitri Shostakovich, and Dominick Argento. His teachers have included Richard Knoll, Norman Gulbrandsen, Diane Forlano, and John Wustman. He has been a member of the faculty at Valparaiso University since 1991.

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