**Robert Sims**

Robert Sims, Gold Medal winner of the American Traditions Competition, has been hailed by critics

for his rich tone, energetic performances, and convincing stage presence.

This season Robert appeared in his second telecast with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. He returned to the Oakland Symphony Orchestra singing Brahms' German Requiem, as well as solo appearances with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and at Symphony Center in Chicago. Robert made his debut with Chicago Opera Theater in the world premiere of Dan Shore's *Freedom Ride* and produced *Masters of the Spiritual* at New York's Lincoln Center. He has appeared as the leading baritone in *The James Baldwin Chronicles* with Renee Baker and the Chicago Modern Orchestra Project, and as Pangloss in Bernstein’s *Candide* with the Oakland Symphony. Robert has toured Germany, Austria and Switzerland as the featured soloist with Roland Carter and the inSpirit Male Chorus performing spirituals of Noah Ryder, Roland Carter and Roland Hayes. Since his solo debut at Carnegie Hall in 2005 (featuring a special appearance by the late Odetta), Sims has made several appearances at that venue performing the spirituals of Jacqueline B. Hairston, and most notably as a featured soloist in the 2009 series, Honor! *A Celebration of the African American Cultural Legacy* (at the invitation of Jessye Norman). His most recent Carnegie performance was a recital honoring the late Sylvia Olden Lee. Sims has been presented in the Bay Area numerous times by Four Seasons Concerts founded by the late Dr. W. Hazaiah Williams. He sang the world premiere of Alice Walker's *Peace is Always a Good Idea* for the Afro Solo Music Festival in San Francisco and Noah Gasser's *Black Suite Blues* with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra. He has been presented in concert by Friends of Negro Spirituals and has premiered Lena McLin's *I'm a Soldier* with the Chicago Sinfonietta among other orchestras throughout the U.S. Sims founded and toured nationally with the ensemble, Three Generations. This trio which specializes in American spirituals and folk songs has included the renowned George Shirley, Kenneth Overton, the late William Warfield and Benjamin Matthews. He has also performed with the trio Simon, Sykes & Sims (with Simon Estes and Jubilant Sykes) singing spirituals and American songs. Sims has appeared on numerous radio and television programs including Bill McLaughlin’s *Exploring Music*, NPR’s *Performance Today*, *The Leonard Lopate Show*, *Conversations with Ed Tracy, The Gospel Experience with Emmit Powell, The Studs Terkel Program*, and two PBS specials, *In the Spirit,* and the just released *Voices for Freedom: the Hyers Sisters’ Dream, Change,* and *Legacy.* Sims has performed as a soloist with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in the televised *Songs from the Soul with Robert Sims: A Heritage Special.* He had several engagements on *Hour of Power* from the Crystal Cathedral. He has sung at New York’s Lincoln Center with the Ritz Chamber Players and a solo recital, “The Spirituals of Roland Hayes” narrated by George Shirley. Sims has worked with several composers and arrangers including Lena McLin, David Baker, Moses Hogan, Roland Carter,

Undine Smith Moore, Jacqueline Hairston, Wendell Logan, William Dawson, and Brazeal Dennard. He recently released a CD of spirituals arranged by Roland Hayes which accompanied the prize-winning biography of the celebrated tenor, *Roland Hayes: The Legacy of an American Tenor* (in collaboration with Christopher A. Brooks, Indiana University Press 2015). Other recordings include *Songs From Spoon River* by Lita Grier, *Soul of a Singer*, *In the Spirit*, and *Three Generations*. He has three recordings produced by the late Moses Hogan including *Home in a-Dat Rock*, *Deep Rive*r, and *La Magie des plus beaux Negro spirituals.* After winning the Friedrich Schorr Competition, Mr. Sims appeared in Massenet's *Cendrillon*, which won the National Opera America Award. He made his Goodman Theater debut in Kurt Weil’s *Lost In the Stars* under the direction of Frank Galati, and sang the role of Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* with Opera Carolina. His other operatic credits include roles in *Romeo et Juliette* and *Die Zauberflöte*, *Porgy and Bess, La Traviata, I Pagliacci, Cosi Fan Tutte* and *Le Nozze di Figaro.* He is the recipient of the Living Heritage Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award and the Friends of Negro Spirituals Heritage Keeper’s Award. Mr. Sims is the donor of the Robert Sims Spiritual Prize for the George Shirley Vocal Competition. He is an alumnus of Oberlin Conservatory, SUNY Binghamton, Northwestern University, and Music Academy of the West. For more information visit [**www.RobertSims.com**](http://www.robertsims.com/)