

Samuel E. Ramey

Hometown: Colby, KS

Residence: Glenview, IL

Education: Wichita State University, Bachelor of Music in music performance, 1968

Professional debut: 1973, New York City Opera, as Zuniga in “Carmen,” age 31

Career:

- He holds the distinction of being the most recorded bass in history, with more than 80 operas, recordings of arias, symphonic works, solo recital programs and popular crossover albums on every major label.
- His recordings have won nearly every major award, including three Grammy Awards, three Grand Prix du Disc Awards, and Best of the Year citations from journals including Opera News.
- He has established a reputation unequalled in the musical world for his portrayal of devils and villains. The role of Mephistopheles in Gounod’s “Faust” has become his most-performed, with more than 200 performances.
- He has portrayed a wide variety of other memorable characters, including Mozart’s “Don Giovanni,” the Tsar in Mussorgsky’s “Boris Godunov,” the preacher Olin Blitch in “Susannah,” the title role in Puccini’s “Gianni Schicchi,” and Raimondo in “Lucia di Lammermoor.”
- He has worked with every major conductor in the world, including Julius Rudel, Claudio Abbado, Leonard Bernstein, James Conlon, Sir Colin Davis, James Levine, Riccardo Muti, Seiji Ozawa and Sir Simon Rattle.
- His surprisingly versatile voice helped spark a renewed interest in the bel canto style in professional opera.
- In 1995, he was named Kansan of the Year by the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas and in 1998 the French Ministry of Culture awarded him the rank of Commander in the Order of Arts and Letters.

Accolades:

- “Ramey’s singing is the stuff of which operatic legends are made.” – **The New York Post**
- “This is the voice that registers majesty, that paints big sorrows and big happinesses, that speaks with God; a voice for emperors and prophets and victorious generals.” – **Michael Scott, Vancouver Sun**
- “What further praise for Samuel Ramey? Suffice it to say that his electrical presence, his bounding athleticism, his keen intelligence, his dark and chimerically versatile bass voice were all put to the noblest of purposes – a fully fleshed-out, highly complicated portrayal of the flawed Czar Boris.” – **Tim Page, Washington Post**

Family: married and has one son