**Marquita Lister**

has sung with major companies in the U.S. and abroad, specializing in the [lirico-spinto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinto_soprano) repertoire. Lister is considered one of the leading interpreters of Bess in [*Porgy and Bess*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porgy_and_Bess), having performed the role hundreds of times in companies across the globe, and she is also renowned for her portrayals of [Aida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aida) and [Salome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salome_(opera)), two signature roles.

Lister was born in [Washington, D.C.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington,_D.C.) She attended Western High School before it became the Duke Ellington School for the Performing Arts, and then she transferred to [Woodrow Wilson High School](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodrow_Wilson_High_School_(Washington,_D.C.)) from which she graduated. She won several vocal competitions as a teenager. She went on to graduate from the [New England Conservatory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_England_Conservatory) of Music with a [Bachelor of Music](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bachelor_of_Music) degree and earned a [Master of Music](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Master_of_Music) degree from [Oklahoma City University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oklahoma_City_University), where she studied with famed vocal teacher [Inez Silberg](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Inez_Silberg&action=edit&redlink=1). In 1983 she won the regional [Metropolitan Opera Auditions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metropolitan_Opera).

Lister apprenticed at the [Houston Grand Opera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houston_Grand_Opera) (1987–89), and made her mainstage debut with the company as the title heroine in [Giuseppe Verdi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giuseppe_Verdi)'s [*Aida*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aida) in 1992. She went on to sing principal soprano roles at the [San Francisco Opera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francisco_Opera), [Portland Opera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portland_Opera), [Austin Lyric Opera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austin_Lyric_Opera), and the [Vancouver Opera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vancouver_Opera) among others. She portrayed the role of Bess in a world tour that played the [Opéra Bastille](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Op%C3%A9ra_Bastille) in Paris and the [La Scala](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Scala) in Milan. She sang Musetta in [*La bohème*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_boh%C3%A8me) at the [Arena di Verona Festival](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arena_di_Verona_Festival), then Bess, yet again, at the [Bregenzer Festspiele](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bregenzer_Festspiele) and [New York City Opera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City_Opera), where she won the Diva Award (2002). She also appeared as Bess in New York City Opera's "Live From Lincoln Center" PBS broadcast of [*Porgy and Bess*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porgy_and_Bess) on March 20, 2002.

In recent years Lister has sung [Lady Macbeth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macbeth_(opera)) and Aida at Dresden's [Semperoper](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semperoper), [Rusalka](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rusalka_(opera)) at [Boston Lyric Opera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boston_Lyric_Opera), and Cassandre in [*Les Troyens*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les_Troyens) at the [Amazon Theatre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon_Theatre) in Brazil. Last summer[[*when?*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Dates_and_numbers#Chronological_items)] she again starred as Bess in a concert version of Gershwin's opera at the [Hollywood Bowl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollywood_Bowl).

She has performed with world-renowned artists such as [Plácido Domingo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pl%C3%A1cido_Domingo), [Justino Díaz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justino_D%C3%ADaz), [Frederica Von Stade](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederica_Von_Stade), [Simon Estes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simon_Estes), and [Sherrill Milnes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sherrill_Milnes). She has recorded George Gershwin’s *Blue Monday* and excerpts from *Porgy and Bess* for [Telarc Records](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telarc_Records) with [Erich Kunzel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erich_Kunzel) and the [Cincinnati Pops](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cincinnati_Pops); "Where the Sunsets Bleed: The Chamber Music of Edward Knight" for Albany Records; and the critically acclaimed *Porgy and Bess* for Decca, hailed by [*Opera News*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opera_News) as one of the best recordings of 2006.

In April 2011, Lister reprised her signature role of Bess in a concert production with the Akron Symphony. During August 2011, Lister sang the role of Serena in [*Porgy and Bess*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porgy_and_Bess) at [Tanglewood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanglewood).