

Benjamin Aaron Smith is a dedicated arts advocate, a champion of new music, and a proponent of arts entrepreneurship and career advancement training preparing musicians for a career in the 21st Century. Smith is a tenor pursuing his Doctorate of Music in Voice at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music in Bloomington, Indiana studying with Patricia Havranek. Smith is a Part-Time Instructor of Music at DePauw University in their 21st Century Musician Initiative, an Adjunct Instructor of Music in Voice at the University of Evansville, and a Special Projects Assistant for the Office of Entrepreneurship and Career Development at the IU Jacobs School of Music.

Ben is a native of Evansville, Indiana where he attended Evansville North High School. A proud Husky, Benjamin pursued his love for music playing percussion in the band and singing in numerous choirs and ensembles. He competed often, most notably in the Schmidt Youth Awards. There he earned third place, two second place awards, the Jerry Hoover Award, and the Audience Favorite Award. He continued his education at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music where he earned his Bachelor of Music in 2012 as a Herbert Presidential Scholar and his Masters of Music in 2014 both under the tutelage of Dr. Brian Horne. Benjamin has appeared in IU Opera Theater's production of Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore* as Ralph Rackstraw, Bernstein's *Candide* as Charles Edward and in Lehar's *Die lustige Witwe* as Kromow. His other credits for IUOT include the ensembles for Nikolai's *Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor*, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Gounaud's *Faust*, Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Puccini's *La bohème*, Verdi's *Falstaff*, Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, Verdi's *La traviata* and Menotti's *The Last Savage*. He has also participated in the Bay View Music Festival where he appeared as Gherardo in a double billing of Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and Ching's *Buoso's Ghost*. Smith has also appeared in Cardinal Stage Company's productions of *Les Misérables* as Combferre and *1776* as James Wilson.

Smith was a member of the 2014 Apollo's Voice ensemble with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. Apollo's Voice is a 20-piece professional vocal ensemble which convenes every year to perform the much anticipated Classical Christmas celebration concert with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. Smith has appeared in the Arts in August concert series and Tower Concert series in Evansville, IN and was a National Finalist representing the East Central Region in the Music Teacher's National Association Young Artist Competition. He has earned accolades at the National Association of Teachers of Singing State Competition where he has twice received first place, once second place, and once third place.

Outside of performing, Benjamin also maintains a private voice studio in Bloomington, IN. He is actively involved the IU Student National Association of Teacher of Singing (SNATS) chapter, where he has served as President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. Benjamin is active in the production of new music as the special advisor and former executive director for New Voices Opera, a student-run contemporary opera organization that acts as a training program for composers, singers, instrumentalists, theater technicians, directors, choreographers, and administrators. He is also the music director for the Bloomington Playwrights Project, the only professional theater company

in the state that produces only new plays and musicals. In 2015, Benjamin took on the directorship of the BPP Youth Music Theater Ensemble, a summer camp where kids from ages 9-16 come together and write and produce an entire musical in one short month. Away from BPP, Benjamin has also music directed at the Ivy Tech John Waldron Arts Center for *Sweeney Todd* as well as for a premiere reading of *And You Shall Be A Blessing* by Deborah Yarchun.

Benjamin still enjoys playing percussion and dabbles in photography from time to time. A self-diagnosed bibliophile, Ben can always be found with book nearby... if he isn't on the golf course. He makes his home in Bloomington, Indiana only a few short hours from his hometown of Evansville. Aside from his work with NVO, BPP, and his voice studio, Ben spends most weekends as a Tasting Room Associate at Oliver Winery.