

## **James Benjamin Rodgers – Tenor**

Winner of the 2008 Joy in Singing Competition, and the 2007 Lotte Lenya Competition, James Benjamin Rodgers completed the Professional Studies Program at the Manhattan School of Music in May of 2008. While at that school he was the Orvis Foundation Scholar and was awarded the Janet D. Schenck Award for his distinguished contribution to the life of the school. James was a member of the school's Opera Studio with which he performed Sam Kaplan in Kurt Weill's, "Street Scene". He was also a member of the American Musical Theatre Ensemble, singing the role of the Baker in Stephen Sondheim's, "Into the Woods". James is a graduate of the Victoria University School of Music where he studied with Emily Mair.

In the summer of 2008 James attended the Merola Opera Program in San Francisco where he took the title role in Benjamin Britten's, "Albert Herring". Following that program, James was invited to return to San Francisco in March of 2009 to perform a recital for the Schwabacher Recital Series. In 2009, he appeared at the Ravinia Festival as Billy in Kurt Weill's "Mahagonny Songspiel" and traveled to New Zealand to perform the role of Tamino in the Southern Opera production of Die Zauberflöte. He also took the role of Marco Polo in Christopher Cerrone's new opera "Forbidden Cities", performed with New Music New Haven at Yale University.

James' operatic roles include: Britten's Albert Herring; Sam in Weill's Street Scene; Orfeo in Monteverdi's L'Orfeo; Pluto in Offenbach's Orpheus and the Underworld; Gherardo, Gianni Schichi. Musical theatre roles include: Alex in Aspects of Love; Will in Oklahoma!; Huck Finn in Big River. He has been soloist in a number of choral works including: L'Enfance du Christ, Berlioz; Handel's Messiah; Mozart's Requiem; Saint-Saens Christmas Oratorio; Vaughn Williams Hodie; The Creation, Haydn; 9th Symphony Beethoven.

Other awards include: Liederkranz Competition Finalist 2009, Napier Computer Systems Aria 2004, the PACANZ Young Performer of the Year Award 2002 and the Wellington Newspapers Ltd. Aria Contest 2002. He has received: Wellington Rotary Scholarship, Marie D'Albini Scholarship, Bell Gully Travel Award, Napier Computer Systems Aria, Sir Henry Cooper Memorial Scholarship in Music, a grant from the Lankhuyzen/Whetu Kairangi Masonic Trust, a grant from the Malvina Major Foundation, Les & Sonia Andrews Cultural Foundation Scholarship, Freemasons University Scholarship, Moyra Todd Scholarship, Victoria University Postgraduate Scholarship. James has sung in public master classes with Evelyn Lear, Barbara Cook, Grace Bumbry, Anthony Rolfe-Johnson, Teresa Kubiak, Thomas Hampson, Stephen Blier and Tony award winner Victoria Clark.

James currently resides in New York City.

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