

Steven Nichols Banks is a classical saxophonist, chamber musician, jazz and commercial saxophonist, music educator, advocate for diversity and inclusion in classical music, and composer. Critics have said that he plays with “pristine clarity and enviable precision but [knows] how to add emotional heat to his interpretation” (Herald Times, Bloomington, IN), and that his performances are “breathtaking” (Classical Voice of North Carolina). Steven serves as Assistant Professor of Saxophone and Jazz Studies at the Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music in Berea, OH.

Steven has performed as a concerto soloist with the North Carolina Symphony, Indiana University Symphony Orchestra, Durham Symphony, and the Northwestern University Symphonic Wind Ensemble. As an orchestral saxophonist, he has recently started performing in the wind section of The Cleveland Orchestra. In January of 2018, Steven went on tour with the legendary ensemble to perform the New York premiere of Johannes Maria Staud’s *Stromab* for symphony orchestra.

As an advocate for contemporary classical music, Steven has performed and premiered new works at the Ear Taxi New Music Festival, NUNC!2 New Music Conference, the Northern Illinois University New Music Concerts, to name a few. Most recently, Steven is leading a consortium of saxophonists to commission Joel Thompson to write a concerto for baritone saxophone and orchestra.

Steven is the baritone saxophonist of the award-winning Kenari Quartet. They enjoy a regular schedule of touring and recording at universities and chamber music series’ around the country. The group has earned top prizes at 7 national and international chamber music competitions. Their debut album, *French Saxophone Quartets*, was released in December 2016 under the Naxos Records label. Kenari is represented by Jean Schreiber of Classics Alive Artists.

Banks is an advocate for diversity and inclusion in the classical music education and performance. In March 2017, Steven gave a talk at the TEDxNorthwesternU 2017 conference with ideas about how to create change in institutionalized prejudices against women and people of color.

Mr. Banks has a Master of Music degree from the Northwestern University Bienen School of Music in Saxophone Performance, Bachelor of Arts degree in Saxophone Performance with a minor in Jazz Studies from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, and a high school diploma from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. His primary saxophone teachers have been Taimur Sullivan, Otis Murphy, Jr., and Galvin Crisp. He has studied jazz with David Baker, Pat Harbison, Jeremy Allen, Luke Gillespie, Tom Walsh, Wayne Wallace, Brent Wallarab, and Ronald Rudkin.

Steven is an endorsing artist for Conn-Selmer instruments and LefreQue Sound Solutions.