

Organist Pat Bianchi *long bio*

Two-time grammy nominated organist and winner of Downbeat Magazine's 2016 rising star poll Pat Bianchi, has established himself as one of the most in demand organists on the scene today. His command of the instrument, harmonic prowess, rhythmic intensity and versatility are rivaled by few.

Bianchi, who comes from a musically gifted family, began playing organ at the age of 7, after receiving a Farfisa Compact Duo organ as a Christmas gift. His grandfathers (Pat Bianchi – Saxophone and Richard Zona – Trumpet) along with his father (Nick Bianchi – Drums) all working musicians, provided a great deal of support and guidance early in his musical development. Recognizing Pat's continuing affinity for music, his parents enrolled him in classical piano study. While still maintaining a strong interest in organ, he was playing his first professional gigs by the age of 11, eventually performing with dance bands around his hometown of Rochester, NY.

Bianchi's interest shifted in his high school years as he began to also focus on piano. Enrolling in The Eastman School of Music's preparatory program for piano and music theory, Pat was also mentored by numerous musicians in the Rochester jazz scene, eventually choosing to continue his studies at Berklee College of Music in Boston. Bianchi never lost sight of his love of Jazz Organ and since a B3 was still out of his reach, he began spending more time on a smaller version of the famed instrument called a Hammond M100. With his passion and dedication, (also not being able to play left hand bass on a Spinet organ) Bianchi taught himself to play bass lines solely with his foot pedals. It was shortly after this time that Bianchi had a chance encounter with his hero {and soon to be mentor} Joey DeFrancesco. This was

the moment Pat knew that in time he would leave the piano behind for the Hammond B3. After graduating Berklee cum laude, Bianchi secured the position as the house pianist at the famous El Chapultepec club in Denver, CO. The Pec (as it is known to locals) often brought in guest artists giving Pat the opportunity to play with such greats as Red Holloway, Dakota Staton, Carl Fontana, Javon Jackson, Mark Elf, Bud Shank, Brad Leali, Pete Christlieb, and Conte Candoli. After being at the Pec for 6 nights a week for almost 3 years, Pat became an important fixture on the Denver Jazz Scene.

At this time, Bianchi decided to focus exclusively on the organ making his national debut as an organist, appearing on two recordings as a member the Denver based organ trio, 3osity. The national release of Art of The Jazz Organ Trio and the subsequent recording Tri-O-City brought Bianchi wider recognition and onto a larger stage as a rising star of the organ.

Moving to NYC, Bianchi quickly established himself in the competitive New York scene. At this time, legendary saxophonist Lou Donaldson immediately took notice of the young organist.

Bianchi then joined the faculty of the University of Colorado at Boulder Jazz Studies Program teaching piano, theory and ensembles to undergraduate, masters and doctoral students. During this time he recorded his first album as a leader, East Coast Roots, which features Mark Whitfield on guitar and Byron Landham on drums. At the same time, Bianchi began working closely with drummer Ralph Peterson Jr. on collaborative projects, including and co-leading The Unity Project (a tribute to organist Larry Young and his album Unity).

Bianchi returned to New York City in June of 2008, soon after, he officially joined The Lou Donaldson's quartet in 2009. Continuing to play with Lou, Bianchi also

joined Pat Martino's working trio in 2011 while taking on the responsibilities as musical director. Bianchi is featured on numerous recordings such as Tim Warfield's *Sentimental Journey*, a follow up to Warfield's recording *One For Shirley* (on which he also appears) as well as guitarist Chuck Loeb's release, *Plain and Simple*. At this time Bianchi also continued to perform with drummer Ralph Peterson Jr., forging ahead with *The Unity Project*. Bianchi was featured, recording much of this material on Peterson's CD *Outer Reaches*. Soon after Bianchi released his second recording as a leader, *Back Home*. This recording features Terell Stafford, Ralph Peterson Jr, Wayne Escoffery, Carmen Intorre Jr. and Gilad Hekselman.

While still actively performing with both Pat Martino and Lou Donaldson, Bianchi not only continues to collaborate with many well known musicians, he is also on the faculty of Temple University (in Philadelphia) and Queens College (NYC). Bianchi has released six CD's as a leader and is also a featured artist on over 30 recordings. Building on the success of his 2015 recording "*A Higher Standard*", his newest release, "*In The Moment*" (Which was #1 on Jazzweek Radio Charts and #2 for over 8 weeks) features an array of guests including Pat Martino, Kevin Mahogany, Joe Locke, Peter Bernstein, Paul Bollenback, Byron Landham and Carmen Intorre, Jr.

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