

Curriculum Vitae

Alton Merrell

Pittsburgh, PA

Web: <http://www.altonmerrell.com>

Education

Ph.D. Music / Jazz Studies (2013)
University of Pittsburgh

Dissertation: *The Life and Music of McCoy Tyner: An Examination of the Social and Cultural Influences on McCoy Tyner and His Music.*

M.M. Jazz Studies, Piano Performance (2002), Cum Laude
Youngstown State University

B.M. Music Education, with emphasis in Classical & Jazz Piano Performance
(2000), Cum Laude
Youngstown State University

Teaching Experience & Courses Taught

Minstrel School of Music, Director & Faculty (2016 - Present)
Jazz Piano, Gospel Piano, Pop Piano, Music Theory, Improvisation,
African American Music History, Consulting, Empowerment Coaching

National Jazz Workshop, Faculty (2015 & 2016)
Jazz Theory, Jazz Piano, Rhythm Section Coaching

Youngstown State University, Professor (2013 - 2015)
Director of the Jazz Studies Program, Applied Jazz Piano, Jazz Keyboard, Jazz
Improvisation, Jazz History, Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Combos, Contemporary Ensemble

West Virginia Wesleyan College, Pianist & Lecturer (2012)
Master Class and Tribute Concert to Blue Note Records
with the James Moore Sextet

University of Pittsburgh, Instructor (2011 - 2013)
Basic Musicianship: Class Piano

University of Pittsburgh, Graduate Teaching Assistant (2008 - 2013)
Jazz History

University of Pittsburgh, Lecturer (2009)
Jazz Composition

Covenant Church of Pittsburgh Fine Arts Academy, Director & Instructor (2005 - 2008)
Jazz, Classical and Gospel Piano, Music Theory, Improvisation

China, Nanjing Institute of the Arts (2004)
Jazz Piano Master Class and Lecture Presenter

China, Hangzhou Teachers College (2004)
Jazz Piano Master Class and Lecture Presenter

Youngstown State University, Adjunct Instructor (2002 - 2005)
Applied Jazz Piano, Jazz Keyboard, Jazz Improvisation,
Jazz Theory, Jazz Combo

China, China Conservatory, Beijing, China (2002)
Jazz Piano Master Class and Lecture Presenter

Youngstown State University, Graduate Teaching Assistant (2000 - 2002)
Applied Classical & Jazz Piano, Jazz Combo, Jazz Ensemble

Youngstown State University, Adjunct Instructor (2002 - 2005)
Applied Jazz Piano, Jazz Keyboard, Jazz Improvisation,
Jazz Theory, Jazz Combo

Private Piano Instruction, Local and Worldwide via Skype (2000 - Present)
Jazz, Classical and Gospel Piano Instruction

Publications

Media - *Jazz, Gospel, Pop Piano Video Lessons* via www.minstrelschool.com
Pittsburgh: (Present)

Dissertation - *The Life and Music of McCoy Tyner: An Examination of the
Social and Cultural Influences on McCoy Tyner and His Music.* (2013)

Book - *Music Theory For The Contemporary Musician.* Pittsburgh: Minstrel
Publishing Company (2006)

Awards and Honors

Presenter at the National Jazz Educator's Network Conference - San Diego, CA. (2015)

Steans Music Institute Program for Jazz at Ravinia, (2012)

Selected Participant: David Baker, Curtis Fuller, Nathan Davis, Rufus Reid - Faculty
Chicago, Illinois

Arts and Sciences Teaching Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh (2011)

K. Leroy Irvis Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh (2008)

Gospel Jazz Artist of the Year, Urban Gospel Industry Award (2005)

Best New Gospel Jazz Artist & Producer, Urban Gospel Industry Award (2005)

American Gospel Music Performance Award (2004)

Performance of Original Compositions with the YSU Jazz Quintet in Beijing, China
(2002) and Hangzhou, China (2004)

Selected to perform in a Master Class with Danilo Perez, Tri-C Jazz Fest (2002)

Outstanding Jazz Performance Student Award, DownBeat Magazine, (2000)

Youngstown State University Graduate Assistant Scholarship (2000)

Founces M. Luley Music Scholarship (1996)

Professional Experience

Featured Performance at the Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival 2018
Dr. Alton Merrell & Impact

Performance with the James Moore Sextet 2013
Hosted by the West Virginia Jazz Society and
Wesleyan College

Performance with drummer Cecil Brooks III - 2013
International Pittsburgh JazzLive Festival

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| Alton Merrell Group - Performance in the Jazz Crawl as part of the International Pittsburgh JazzLive Festival | 2013 |
| Jazz Vespers Service - First Presbyterian Church, Guest Artist | 2013 |
| Concert with Tom Wendt at James St. Pittsburgh, PA | 2013 |
| Alton Merrell Group - Performance in the Pittsburgh JazzLive Music Series | 2013 |
| Concert with Ken Karsh at James St. Pittsburgh, PA | 2013 |
| Tribute Concert to George and Ira Gershwin with Sean Jones, Eli Degibri, Roger Humphries, and Dwayne Dolphin | 2012 |
| Alton Merrell Group - Featured Performance at "A Jazzy Christmas" in Columbus, Ohio | 2012 |
| Roger Humphries and RH Factor - Concert | 2012 |
| Alton Merrell Group - Featured Performance at the Youngstown Jazz Festival | 2012 |
| Alton Merrell Group - Performance at Riverview Park as part of the "Stars at Riverview" Series | 2012 |
| Alton Merrell Group - Performance in the Jazz Crawl as part of the International Pittsburgh JazzLive Festival | 2012 |
| Concert with NEA Jazz Master Benny Golson and the Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra - Pianist and Featured Soloist | 2012 |
| Alton Merrell Group - Performance in the Pittsburgh JazzLive Music Series | 2012 |
| Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation Prayer Breakfast Guest Artist | 2012 |

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| Billy Strayhorn 4th Annual Suite Life Jazz Quintet - Pianist and Featured Soloist | 2011 |
| Rapture Oratorio - Music Director, Arranger, Pianist | 2011 |
| Symphonic Celebration of African American Culture featuring Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and Sean Jones - Pianist | 2010 |
| Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra - Pianist | 2009 - Present |
| A Tribute To Phyllis Hyman Music Production - Music Director and Pianist | 2010 |
| Guest Soloist - The Judah Project | 2007 |
| Forgiven Oratorio - Music Director, Pianist | 2009 |
| Covenant Church of Pittsburgh - Music Director | 2005 - 2008 |
| The Jazz Heritage Orchestra - Pianist | 2004 |
| Tour of Beijing, China with YSU Faculty Jazz Group | 2002 |
| Guest Soloist - Lakeland Community College | 2002 |
| Cleveland Jazz Orchestra - Intermittent Pianist | 2000 - 2002 |
| New Jerusalem Fellowship Church - Music Director | 1994 - 2004 |

Recording As Leader

You're The Reason [*Minstrel Records* - Alton Merrell (p), Jeff Grubbs, Paul Caffie (b), James Johnson III (d), Sean Jones (tp.), Chris Hemmingway (as)]

Recordings As A Sideman

Sean Jones' "Kaleidoscope" CD [*Mack Avenue Records*] - Alton Merrell (p) on "You're The Reason" and organ on "I Come To Thee" both featuring Kim Burrell and Sean Jones.

Nathan Davis’s “Parisian Hoedown” CD [*Tomorrow International Records*] - Alton Merrell (p) on “Little Sophie.”

Carolyn Perteete “Insomnia” CD [*Perteete Records*] - Alton Merrell (p) on “Over Again.”

Dan Wilson “Dan Willson” CD [*Independent*] - Alton Merrell (p) and featured soloist.

Sound Doctrine “Inspire” CD [*Soul Food Records*] - Alton Merrell (p) and featured soloist.

YSU Jazz Ensemble “Lester Left Town ” CD [*Independent*] - Alton Merrell (p) and a featured soloist.

YSU All-Star Alumni Jazz Ensemble “The Leonardi Legacy” CD [*Independent*] - Alton Merrell (p) and a featured soloist.

YSU Jazz Ensemble “Biddle de Bop” CD [*Independent*] - Alton Merrell (p) and a featured soloist.

YSU Jazz Ensemble “Burnin’ ” CD [*Independent*] - Alton Merrell (p) and a featured soloist.

Performances As Sideman

Jazz: Cecil Brooks III, Benny Golson, Jimmy Heath, Christian McBride, |Jeff “Tain” Watts, Ralph Lalama, Claudio Roditi, Rufus Reed, Sean Jones, Roger Humphries, Dwayne Dolphin, Pogie Bell, Greg Bandy

Gospel: Maurette Brown Clark, Israel Houghton, Martha Munizzi, Donnie McClurkin, Kim Burrell, Dorothy Norwood, LaShun Pace-Rhodes

Affiliations / Memberships

Broadcast Music Inc. (BMI)
Alpha Kappa Mu Honor Society
Jazz Education Network

Computer Skills

MIDI Technology, Computer Based Recording, Logic, Digital Performer, Reason, Bias Peak, and Finale

Languages

Spanish: reading knowledge