

Murray James Morrison, Ph.D.

莫瑞·詹姆斯·莫里森博士

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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Jazz and popular music educator. Former Foreign Expert with the Sichuan Conservatory of Music. Guest lecturer on a wide array of musical subjects. Flexible and cross-disciplinary. Over 20 years total teaching experience.
- Musician, composer, and bandleader with an active performing and recording career.

EDUCATION

- Ph.D., Music Performance, New York University, 2018.
 - Dissertation: “Practitioner and Prophet: An Analysis of Sonny Stitt’s Music and Relationship to Charlie Parker.”
- M.M., Jazz Studies, Rutgers University, 2007.
- B.M., Jazz Studies and Music Theory, University of North Texas, 2005.
- Music Diploma, Grant MacEwan Community College, 2001.

ACADEMIC / TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Foreign Expert / Head of Saxophone

Sichuan Conservatory of Music, Popular Music Academy

2013–2015

- Courses taught: Private Saxophone (Fall 2013–Spring 2015), Popular Music Styles and Analysis (Fall 2013–Spring 2015), Jazz Improvisation (Fall 2013–Spring 2014).
- Developed four-year saxophone performance curriculum and grading rubric.
- Main Advisor for campus-wide curriculum development initiative.
- Musical Director/Ensemble Coach: various faculty and student ensembles.

Saxophone Instructor

Sichuan Conservatory of Music, Popular Music Academy

2011–2013

- Courses taught: Private Saxophone (Fall 2011–Spring 2013), Teacher Development Course (Fall 2012).

ACADEMIC / TEACHING EXPERIENCE, cont'd

Department Assistant

New York University, NYU Steinhardt

2007–2009

- Assistant to Jazz Studies Director Dr. David Schroeder.
- Assumed ensemble directing/teaching responsibilities when needed: NYU Jazz Orchestra, Brian Lynch Bebop Big Band, various small ensembles (Fall 2007–Spring 2009).

Teaching Assistant

Rutgers University, Mason Gross School of the Arts

2005–2007

- Course taught: Survey of Jazz Styles (Fall 2006).
- Teaching Assistant: Rutgers Jazz Ensemble (Fall 2005–Spring 2007).
- Undergraduate Student Coaching: Music Composition, Music Theory (Fall 2005–Spring 2007).

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Head Composer, Rye Studios, 2011–2012

- Produced and recorded music for a Chinese educational app company.

Bandleader / Arranger / Saxophonist, 2010–2015

- Co-led, composed for, and performed across China with musical groups Dragonovsky Funk Project (funk/R&B), The Trouble (ska), Boss Ma Band (jazz).

Freelance Composer / Orchestrator, 2011–Present

- Services offered: composing, arranging/orchestration, concert programming, song selection, score preparation.

Compositional Assistant to Stefon Harris, 2009

- Assisted Grammy-nominated recording artist Stefon Harris on commission for Imani Winds: “The Anatomy of a Box: A Sonic Painting in Metal, Wood, and Wind.”

Private Teacher and Clinician, 1996–Present

- Subjects taught: saxophone, theory (jazz & classical), aural skills, improvisation, composition and arranging, music history, music fundamentals.

INVITED LECTURES / MASTERCLASSES

- Saxophone Clinic, Edmonton Catholic Schools All-Star Jazz Band, 2019.
- “The Problem of Imitation and Innovation in Jazz Music,” Nanjing University of the Arts, 2018.
- “The Importance of Melody in Jazz Composition and Improvisation,” Nanjing University of the Arts, 2018.
- “Developing a Melodic Concept for Improvisation,” Shanghai Conservatory of Music, 2014.
- “How to Live in Music,” Sichuan Conservatory of Music, 2014.
- “Playing the Blues,” Xinghai Conservatory of Music, 2013.
- “The Music of Miles Davis,” Xinghai Conservatory of Music, 2013.
- “Building a Jazz Curriculum in China,” Shanghai Conservatory of Music, 2012.
- Twelve-week masterclass on jazz saxophone, Sichuan Conservatory of Music, 2011.
- “Improvisation 101,” JZ School, Shanghai, 2008.

SELECT RECORDINGS

- Bodo von Zingler, untitled solo album (forthcoming).
- The Trouble, Chinese ska band, debut album (forthcoming).
- Musical sketches, compositions, arrangements: “Highways and Hedges,” “If I Fall in Love with You,” “Happy New Year (in six-part harmony),” “Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted,” “Soul Pirate/New City,” “Melody’s Lullaby,” “Some Christmas Music,” “O Canada,” 2015–2018.
- “Jasmine,” song with Chinese pop singer Fei Fei, 2013.
- *I Am a Tyrannosaurus*, children’s musical, Rye Studios, 2012.
- “Marine Life,” incidental music for educational children’s app, Rye Studios, 2012.
- Background music, instrumental music, jingles, narration, songs, sound effects, video game music (conventionally recorded and MIDI sequenced), various projects, Rye Studios, 2011–2012.
- *No Beginning, No End*, Kenny Werner with Joe Lovano and Judi Silvano, Half Note Records, 2010.
- *Happy Every Day*, Murray James Morrison Quintet, solo album, 2010.
- *Time Difference*, Masakazu Mizuno, 2010.
- Kenny Werner/Quincy Jones project, incidental music for film, 2008.
- *Live at Uncommon Ground*, Snarky Puppy, 2005.
- *Travellin’ the Route* with UNT Jazz Singers, 2004/2005.
- *UNT Jazz Chamber Vols. 1-2* with various small groups, 2004/2005.
- Four semesters with Two O’Clock Lab Band, 2003–2005.

INTERVIEWS / PRESS

- *The Conversation*, “Can Jazz Survive in China?”, interview, 2015.
- *Hello Chengdu* magazine, interview, 2013.
- *Ridiculous* magazine, “Jazz in Chengdu,” featured article, 2011.
- Lonely Planet/Discovery Channel TV documentary on music in China, band interview, 2011.
- sina.com.cn, “Zebra Festival: Crowd Joins ‘The Trouble’ in Dancing, Squeezing” performance review, 2011.
- chengdu.cn Entertainment News, “Best Jazz Group ‘Boss Ma’ Performs Zebra Festival,” interview, 2010.
- *NYU Today*, “NYUAD Institute and Steinhardt Host Inaugural Academic Conference in Abu Dhabi,” performance review, 2009.
- ChinesePod, “Jazz and China from a Different Perspective,” interview, 2008.
- CBC Radio Alberta, interview, 2003.

SELECT FESTIVALS / PERFORMANCES

- “Mad for Music” (TV program), Anhui Central Television, Anhui, China, 2014.
- Guiyang Music Festival, Murray James Morrison Quartet, Guiyang, China, 2014.
- Tianyu Music Festival, The Trouble, Lijiang, China, 2013.
- Erhai World Music Festival, The Trouble, Dali, China, 2013.
- Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Boss Ma Band, Shanghai, China, 2012.
- Big Love Music Festival, The Trouble, Chengdu, China, 2012.
- Zebra Music Festival, The Trouble, Chengdu, televised performance, Sichuan TV, 2011.
- Xindu Pomelo Culture Festival, The Trouble, Xindu, China, televised performance, CDTV, 2011.
- Zebra Music Festival, Boss Ma Band, Chengdu, 2010.
- Festival Bled in Vila Bled, Matevza Smerkola Sextet, Slovenia, 2009.
- NYU Jazz Orchestra performance with Wayne Krantz, Blue Note NYC, 2009.
- NYU Symphony Orchestra, music of Leonard Rosenman, Skirball Center NYC, 2009.
- NYU Jazz Orchestra performance, the Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi, UAE, 2009.
- NYU Kenny Werner Artist Ensemble, Blue Note NYC, 2008.
- NYU Jazz Orchestra performance with Randy Brecker, Blue Note NYC, 2008.
- NYU Jazz Orchestra performance with Jon Hendricks, NYC, 2008.
- NYU Jazz Orchestra performances with Lenny Pickett, locations worldwide, 2007–2009.
- NYU Jazz Nonet performance with Joe Lovano, Blue Note NYC, 2007.
- Show Band/Orchestra musician, Princess Cruises, 2007.
- Rutgers Jazz Ensemble performance with Frank Sinatra, Jr., 2007.
- Rutgers Jazz Ensemble performance with Edward Simon, 2007.
- Rutgers Jazz Ensemble performance with Eddie Palmieri, 2006.
- North Texas Jazz Festival in Addison, opened for Chick Corea, 2005.

SELECT FESTIVALS / PERFORMANCES, cont'd

- IAJE Conference, with UNT Jazz Singers I, 2005.
- Live performances with Snarky Puppy, 2004–2005.
- Small group performance, opened for The Headhunters, Granada Theater, Dallas, 2004.
- Denton Arts & Jazz Festival, various UNT ensembles, 2002–2005.
- Performances at major jazz venues including Blue Note NYC, Bowery Poetry Club, Cachaca, Cecil's Jazz Club, the Beat Niq, Francis Winspear Center, Jazz Club Gajo Ljubljana, JZ Club Shanghai.
- Performed as sideman for Conrad Herwig, Ralph Bowen, Ron McClure, Michael Philip Mossman, Scotty Wright.
- Gigs and concerts throughout the United States, Canada, the United Arab Emirates, Slovenia and China.

HONORS AND AWARDS

- “Costa Rica” competition, 2nd place finish, w/ judges Jeff Levenson (producer, Half Note Records) and John Newcott (producer, Verve Records), 2009.
- Assistantship, New York University (full-tuition scholarship), 2007–2009.
- DownBeat Student Music Award, Two O’Clock Lab Band, 2006.
- Assistantship, Rutgers University, 2005–2007.
- Graduation with Honors, cum laude, University of North Texas, 2005.
- Academic Full Scholarship, UNT, 2002/03 & 2004/05.
- Jazz Scholarship, UNT, 2002–2005.
- Honor Roll, UNT, 2001–2005.
- Dean’s List, Grant MacEwan Community College, 2001.
- Grant MacEwan College / University of Alberta Jazz Band Scholarship, GMCC, 2001.
- K-Rock Scholarship, GMCC, 2001.
- Higher Education Award, Syncrude Canada, Ltd., 2000–2002.
- First Class Standing, GMCC, 2000–2001.
- Alexander Rutherford Scholarship, Alberta Heritage Fund, 1999.
- Entrance Audition Scholarship, GMCC, 1999.

LANGUAGES

- English: native language
- Mandarin Chinese: professional working proficiency