

Jonathan Saraga

🎺 Trumpeter Flugelhornist 🎹 **ComposerArranger** 🎓 Educator Producer 🎧🎙️ **Doctor of Musical Arts**

New York, NY 10028

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New York City-based trumpeter, composer and Doctor of Musical Arts, Jonathan Saraga, is a Blue Truffle Music and Fresh Sound Records recording artist. He took 1st place in the 2007 International Trumpet Guild Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition and competed as a finalist in the 2009 Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition. He has been awarded selected participation in the 2011 School for Improvisational Music Summer Intensive Program, the 2015 Banff International Summer Intensive Program in Jazz and Creative Music, and the 2019 Banff Early Fall Musicians in Residence program. Jonathan received the Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Award presented by the ASCAP Foundation in 2016, was a 2-time Semi-Finalist as well as a Winner in the International Songwriting Competition in 2016 and 2017, and achieved finalist status in the 2019 New Jazz Works grant presented by Chamber Music America.

Since 2006, Saraga has performed throughout Europe, Asia, the Caribbean and across the U.S. in ensembles led by highly acclaimed artists such as Steve Coleman, Henry Cole, Maria Schneider, Darcy James Argue, Orrin Evans, Josh Evans, Jimmy Greene, Tyshawn Sorey, Eric Bergen and the Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra to name a few. He teaches for NYC-based organizations such as The Afro-Latin Jazz Alliance, The Gramercy Brass Orchestra of New York, New York Ensemble Classes, and The New York Jazz Academy, and has served as a Graduate-Part Time Instructor for the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Willing to relocate: Anywhere

Authorized to work in the US for any employer

Work Experience

Music Teacher

Jazz Empowers - New York, NY

October 2019 to Present

"The mission of Jazz Empowers is to transform the lives of youth in underserved schools through jazz education. We fulfill this mission by partnering with underserved schools across the country to start and develop jazz programs. We are driven by our belief that every child in America has the right to a high quality music education. We teach jazz because it is rooted in improvisation which maximizes students' creativity and self expression. We believe jazz has the power to transform students' lives intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Because jazz is a language we teach the next generation of jazz musicians to listen, express, and create." —taken from <https://www.jazzempowers.org/mission>

Music Teacher

New York Jazz Academy - New York, NY

May 2017 to Present

The New York Jazz Academy's Summer Jazz Intensives feature private lessons and group workshops for both teens and adults. Each week features new curricular material, which gives musicians the

flexibility to attend as many weeks as they choose. All participants are placed in performance ensembles that stress a combination of reading music, improvising and collaborative music-making.

One of the main goals the NYDIA has for students is to emphasize practical playing experience through a variety of classes, clinics, and performance activities for today's jazz musician. Visits to major New York City jazz venues, including clubs, historical sites, and time spent with influential players on the NYC jazz scene is all part of the package.

Jonathan not only teaches privately, and in group settings, but also conducts clinics, masterclasses, and supervises nights-out, giving the students a special mentored real-world experience.

Music Teacher

New York Ensemble Classes - New York, NY
August 2015 to Present

New York Ensemble Classes arranges groups of music students interested in Jazz and offers instruction through hands-on experience. Their jazz workshops provide a judgment free space where aspiring musicians can explore different aspects of jazz performance under the guidance of experienced instructors.

Jonathan's duties include teaching fundamentals through advanced concepts of jazz music to groups of musicians with all different levels of experience and backgrounds. He creates musical exercises, drills, games, and predetermined scenarios that suite specific combinations of musicians in order to ensure comprehension with an additional element of challenge.

Music Teacher

Afro-Latin Jazz Academy of Music - New York, NY
January 2013 to Present

The Afro Latin Jazz Academy of Music (AL JAM) is an in-school residency program dedicated to providing instrument and ensemble instruction to under-privileged middle and high school students throughout New York City. AL JAM gives students the tools to develop their musicianship and express themselves through music. Members of the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra and other master teaching artists form a core teaching team that works with students twice a week for the full academic year. ALJAM's instructors aim to not teach from any hierarchical perspective. Rather, students are exposed to all types of music with the hope that they will make the choice for themselves what type of artists they want to be. Students are given instruments to practice and they perform for their peers, families, and communities at annual concerts throughout the academic year.

Jonathan's duties included teaching trumpet and music to children ranging from 9-11 years of age in both group and private settings. He has taught as many as 8 students at one time learn how to approach playing the trumpet, and how to begin a practice regimen. Jonathan was also responsible for making sure kids were understanding the material and progressing at their own pace, all whilst having fun in the process. Other duties included interaction with parents and school officials.

Music Teacher

Gramercy Brass Orchestra of New York - New York, NY
May 2010 to Present

The Gramercy Brass Orchestra Band Camp has been in operation since 2009 under the direction of Jonathan's former trumpeter teacher, John Lambert. It's mission is to help kids ages 7 through 14 learn

to play a wide variety of brass and percussion instruments. Activities include full band rehearsals, section specific rehearsals, workshops, master-classes and clinics by world-renowned instrumentalists, as well as guest artist participation throughout the entire length of the camp including in the finale performance.

Jonathan's duties include teaching trumpet and music in both group and private settings. He mentors mentors and conducts group rehearsals for large groups, and assists many young musicians in learning how to approach playing the trumpet, and how to practice efficiently. Jonathan is also responsible for making sure the kids understand the material, are having fun, and progressing at their own pace. He also supervises kids from bus trips from New York City to New Jersey, where the camp is held.

Professional Musician

Jonathan Saraga Music - New York, NY

May 2009 to Present

As someone who recognizes his own ability to create and share content that can have profound effects on a human being, Jonathan feels it is his duty to promote his work in ways that will reach people everywhere, regardless of age, financial means, or social/cultural prerogatives.

One of the healing effects music can have, is that it can re-unite people with childhood or young adult memories, stimulating emotions that may go otherwise untouched, amidst the trials and tribulations of adult life. While he enjoys creating art that amazes and dazzles people, Jonathan lives for the opportunity to touch and help people connect and re-center with their true self. Music has the potential to reach deep into the depths of a person's psyche and remind them of the sacred nature of their existence, and it is his hope that through that process, they will be inspired to further their own pursuit of whatever it is that touches them, and that they believe in.

Jonathan's favorite music to play and his favorite collaborative situations to participate in, are ones where the heart is exposed, and there is a letting go of fear; or at least an opportunity to do so. This can occur in performance situations, but also through interaction with people in non-performance situations. Bringing a state of awareness which acknowledges the human connection and condition, is something Jonathan is constantly attempting to maintain as well as refine.

Freelance Musician

New York, NY

May 2007 to Present

New York City-based trumpeter, composer and Doctor of Musical Arts, Jonathan Saraga, is a Blue Truffle Music and Fresh Sound Records recording artist. He took 1st place in the 2007 International Trumpet Guild Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition and competed as a finalist in the 2009 Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition. He has been awarded selected participation in the 2011 School for Improvisational Music Summer Intensive Program, the 2015 Banff International Summer Intensive Program in Jazz and Creative Music, and the 2019 Banff Early Fall Musicians in Residence program. Jonathan received the Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Award presented by the ASCAP Foundation in 2016, was a 2-time Semi-Finalist as well as a Winner in the International Songwriting Competition in 2016 and 2017, and achieved finalist status in the 2019 New Jazz Works grant presented by Chamber Music America.

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LeBoeuf, Darcy James Argue, Orrin Evans, Josh Evans, Jimmy Greene, Tyshawn Sorey, Eric Bergen and the Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra to name a few. He teaches for NYC-based organizations such as The Afro-Latin Jazz Alliance, The Gramercy Brass Orchestra of New York, New York Ensemble Classes, Jazz Empowers and The New York Jazz Academy, and has served as a Graduate-Part Time Instructor for the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Graduate Part-Time Instructor/Teaching Assistant

University of Colorado, Boulder - Boulder, CO

August 2016 to May 2019

As part of Jonathan's Doctorate of Musical Arts degree work, he served not only as a performing artist, but also as a Graduate Part-Time Instructor and Teaching Assistant for the Thompson Jazz Studies Program which featured 27-months of instructing, conducting and mentoring.

Upon completion of his D.M.A. degree, Jonathan had taught a total of 3 semesters of a 100+ (average) student History of Jazz lecture class for non music-majors, as well as 2 semesters of jazz combo and 2 semesters of jazz orchestra.

Besides teaching college students in small and large classroom settings, Jonathan's duties as a GPTI and TA also required direct communication with faculty and staff around the university, curriculum creation, multi-tasking, heightened organizational ability, grading and assessing student performance, and serving as an ambassador for the Thompson Jazz Studies Program—a program funded by over a million dollars worth of grant and scholarship funding.

Piano, Singing and Drama Teacher

Jubilee Summer Enrichment Program - New York, NY

June 2017 to August 2017

Jubilee's mission statement is to help children become self-motivated learners while discovering the value and meaning of life through education. During this organization's 2-month summer-camp intensive, Jonathan was covering for the regular summer-camp music teacher who was away competing in a piano competition. In her place, Jonathan worked with groups of up to 20 kids ranging from K-7th grades, teaching general music and singing. He also mentored kids in acting and musical theater, and taught private piano lessons.

Additionally, Jonathan was responsible for acquisition, organization and distribution of choral sheet music for 8 age groups (K-7th Grade), and teaching general music classes to each of the above groups. He also taught choral technique and group singing skills and organized a musical/play for the entire camp (administering auditions, copying and distributing play packets, etc.). Interaction with parents and staff was also a large part of the position.

Piano, Trumpet, General Music Teacher

Lyceum Kennedy International School - New York, NY

September 2015 to June 2016

At the Lyceum Kennedy French American School Jonathan assisted bilingual and bicultural students with furthering the enjoyment and appreciation of music. He taught after-school throughout the entire Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 sessions.

Jonathan taught private piano and trumpet lessons, as well as group music appreciation classes and molded lessons for kids ranging from age 4-11. He provided original lesson plans, assignments,

feedback, and mentoring in conjunction with original games, video showings, and student-created scenarios to promote engagement and the fostering of hidden potential. Activities and lessons included musicology, singing, dancing, hand percussion, auxiliary percussion, instrument care, recording, song-writing, multi-instrumental playing, music audio and video analysis, as well as various music inspired games created by himself and by the students.

Departmental Assistant

SUNY Purchase College - Purchase, NY
August 2010 to May 2011

During the 2 semesters he served as Departmental Assistant for the Conservatory of Music at SUNY Purchase, Jonathan performed and carried out various task under the direction of renowned bassist and pedagog, Dr. Todd Coolman, the director of the Jazz Studies program.

Jonathan's duties consisted of various detailed sheet music cataloging, both in office and library, and concert program creation which included detailed artist descriptions and biographies. Jonathan became competent at multitasking and time management while pursuing the completion of his master's degree and tending to the responsibilities of the position.

Departmental Assistant

Rutgers University - New Brunswick, NJ
August 2009 to May 2010

While pursuing his Master of Music degree at the Mason-Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University, Jonathan served as departmental assistant for Conrad Herwig, Grammy-winning trombonist and director of the Jazz Studies program, His duties consisted of various equipment set-up and break-down in both ensemble rehearsal and performance situations. I addition he was responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of the keyboard and computer lab which contained hundreds of thousands of dollars of priceless musical instruments and sound equipment. Jonathan also honed in on his time management and multitasking skills, as he was also pursuing a degree simultaneously.

Summer Camp Counselor

Asphalt Green - New York, NY
June 2007 to August 2009

Having been a former camper, and having received the Lifetime Camper award, Asphalt Green has been a familiar place to Jonathan for many years. Returning there to help foster the growth of kids as he once was, was as much gratifying as it was enjoyable.

As a counselor at Asphalt Green for three summers, Jonathan's role increased from assistant counselor to supervising counselor over this time span. I was responsible for making sure children in various age groups ranging from 5 - 14, were safe, and had fun from the time their parents dropped them off at camp, to when they were picked up.

Jonathan assisted teachers and other activity staff in the organization, administration, and monitoring of various activities throughout the day, such as various sports, arts and crafts, swimming, gymnastics, lunch, and various free-play and free-choice recreational activities. His duties as supervising counselor also included abundant interaction with parents and/or guardians, as well as direct communication with supervising staff.

Summer Camp Counselor

Adults and Children in Trust - New York, NY
July 2006 to August 2006

ACT is a camp established for the betterment of underprivileged children, and has a reputation for excellence in providing kids a fulfilling and memorable camp experience.

As a counselor, Jonathan was responsible for making sure children ages 5 - 14, were safe and had fun from the time their parents dropped them off at camp, to when they were picked up. Jonathan assisted teachers and other activity staff in the organization, administration, and monitoring of various activities throughout the day, such as various sports, arts and crafts, swimming, gymnastics, lunch, and various free-play and free-choice recreational activities. His duties also included abundant interaction with parents and/or guardians, as well as direct communication with supervising staff.

Summer Camp Counselor

Adirondack Camp - Lake George, NY
June 2004 to August 2005

Adirondack Camp sits in the midst of the country's most ancient mountain range in the Adirondack Park preserve, just a few hours' drive from big city civilization.

As a multi-faceted staff member, Jonathan's duties placed him all over campgrounds. Not only was he responsible for the bugle calls for each period change, as well as morning and night alerts, but he was also responsible for the safety, health, and enjoyment of children, the ages of which ranged from 5 -14.

Jonathan also helped to teach and monitor various activities throughout the camp including various water and land sports, arts and crafts, and other skill oriented activities.

Education

Doctorate in Jazz Studies, Music

University of Colorado Boulder - Boulder, CO
August 2016 to May 2019

Master's in Jazz Studies, Music

SUNY at Purchase College - Purchase, NY
August 2010 to May 2011

Master's in Jazz Studies, Music

Rutgers University-New Brunswick - New Brunswick, NJ
September 2009 to May 2010

Bachelor's in Jazz Studies, Music

SUNY at Purchase College - Purchase, NY
August 2005 to May 2009

Skills

- Early Childhood (10+ years)

- Singing (10+ years)
- Trumpet (10+ years)
- Music (10+ years)
- Composition (10+ years)
- Arranging (10+ years)
- Jazz (10+ years)
- Improvisation (10+ years)
- Conducting (3 years)
- Brass Instruments (10+ years)
- Music Education (10+ years)
- Educator (10+ years)
- Performing Arts (10+ years)
- Piano (10+ years)

Links

<http://www.jonathansaraga.com>

<https://jonathansaragamusic.bandcamp.com/>

<https://soundcloud.com/jonathansaraga>

<https://www.facebook.com/jonathansaraga>

<https://www.instagram.com/jonathansaraga/>

<https://www.youtube.com/jonathansaraga>

Awards

Finalist: 2019 Chamber Music America New Jazz Works Grant Competition

July 2019

Chamber Music America's New Jazz Works program provides grants to U.S. jazz ensembles to create, perform, and if desired, record new works. The new work may be composed by the ensemble leader or another member of the ensemble.

The Board of Directors of Chamber Music America has made diversity, inclusion, and equity a primary focus of the organization's work. CMA seeks to fulfill its vision for the future, where people of all races, religions, genders, and abilities are able to fully participate in the performance, presentation, and enjoyment of the many styles of small ensemble music. Therefore, CMA's goal in this program is, through the panel review process, to arrive at a final slate of grantees that is representative of the field in terms of race, gender, and style of jazz.

Selected Participant: 2019 Early Fall Musicians in Residence program

June 2019

Program participants from around the world gather to share, develop and challenge their own ideas and abilities. Banff's stellar faculty of world-renowned musicians, innovators, leaders and thinkers present master classes, lectures, workshops, informal sessions and collaborative concerts.

There is a focus on improvisation, composition, listening, ensemble playing, history, theory, critique, creative concepts and our connections to other genres, fields and disciplines. And most importantly, we put it all to the test in musical performance. Participants play together, collaborate, try out new music in club and concert settings and make live and studio recordings.

Finalist/Honorable Mention: 2017 International Songwriting Competition

April 2018

The International Songwriting Competition (ISC), which the New York Times deems "the songwriting competition to take note of", is an annual song contest whose mission is to provide the opportunity for both aspiring and established songwriters to have their songs heard in a professional, international arena. ISC is designed to nurture the musical talent of songwriters on all levels and promote excellence in the art of songwriting. Amateur and professional songwriters and musicians are invited to participate. ISC has the most prestigious panel of judges of all the songwriting and music contests in the world, offering exposure and the opportunity to have your songs heard by the most influential decision-makers in the music industry.

In the 2017 competition, an original composition of mine featured on my album, "Journey to a New World" (Fresh Sound New Talent 2017). The song 'The Great Journey' received a Finalist nomination, and then an Honorable Mention in the Jazz category in the 2017 International Songwriting Competition (ISC). With over 16,000 entries from 140 countries, only 160 entrees received this award, which is 1% of the total. Judges for this years competition include Vijay Iyer, Danilo Perez, and Mike Stern.

Semi-Finalist: 2016 International Songwriting Competition

February 2017

The International Songwriting Competition (ISC), which the New York Times deems "the songwriting competition to take note of", is an annual song contest whose mission is to provide the opportunity for both aspiring and established songwriters to have their songs heard in a professional, international arena. ISC is designed to nurture the musical talent of songwriters on all levels and promote excellence in the art of songwriting. Amateur and professional songwriters and musicians are invited to participate. ISC has the most prestigious panel of judges of all the songwriting and music contests in the world, offering exposure and the opportunity to have your songs heard by the most influential decision-makers in the music industry.

In the 2016 competition, there were over 16,000 entries and only 10% advanced to the Semi-Finals. The recording/composition that was chosen is featured on my album, "Journey to a New World" (Fresh Sound New Talent 2017). Judges for this years competition include Vijay Iyer, Danilo Perez, and Mike Stern.

Recipient: 2016 Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Award

February 2016

The Award is granted annually to encourage talented young jazz composers during the earliest stages of their careers. The Herb Alpert Foundation, a non-profit, private foundation established in the early 1980s, makes significant annual contributions to a range of programs in the fields of arts, arts education and compassion and well being. Its funding is directed toward projects in which Herb and Lani Alpert and the Herb Alpert Foundation President play an active role.

Each eligible Submission will be judged by a panel of ASCAP composer members (the “Panel”) based on the significance and overall artistry and compositional elements of the musical work or composition. The Panel is selected by the Foundation in the Foundation’s sole discretion. Award-recipient selection resides within the sole discretion of the Panel.

Selected Participant: 2015 Banff International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music

December 2015

Program participants from around the world gather to share, develop and challenge their own ideas and abilities. The stellar faculty of world-renowned musicians, innovators, leaders and thinkers present master classes, lectures, workshops, informal sessions and collaborative concerts.

Focus is on improvisation, composition, listening, ensemble playing, history, theory, critique, creative concepts and connections to other genres, fields and disciplines. Most importantly, it all is put to the test in musical performance. Participants play together, collaborate, try out new music in club and concert settings and make live and studio recordings.

Selected Participant: 2011 School for Improvisational Music Summer Intensive Program

August 2011

The School for Improvisational Music (SIM) is the instructional facet of CIM for aspiring students of creative music. Since 2001, SIM has held over 20 intensive workshop sessions for 800 students from all over the globe. The sessions include 2 masterclasses per day, ensemble coaching, a performance and 2 private lessons per week. The SIM faculty consists of a cross-section of the most creative improvisers from the jazz and contemporary music fields.

The SIM experience encompasses ample playing opportunities and discussion of improvisational concepts. SIM is less about teaching through the lens of style and more about the overarching concepts of improvisation, touching on multiple disciplines. That said, students are offered two private lessons per week with our faculty, allowing personal instruction on any musical topic.

Finalist: 2009 Carmine Caruso Jazz Trumpet Competition

June 2009

First held in 1993, The Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Competition is considered the most prestigious competition for jazz trumpeters in the world. Carmine Caruso was one of the world’s greatest brass teachers. It is to the man and his work that the 2013 Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition is dedicated.

Caruso was born on November 2, 1904, lived his entire life in New York, and died on May 26, 1987. Although he played all the woodwind and string instruments, Caruso made his living as a saxophone player, performing in ballrooms and on radio shows. He played his last club date on his 70th birthday in 1974. Caruso took his first trumpet student in 1942, and within a year had forty brass students. Brass players from all over the world traveled to New York to study with him, and he developed a reputation for being able to help players improve.

Winner: 2007 International Trumpet Guild Jazz Solo Competition

June 2007

The annual ITG Conference features the world's greatest trumpet and brass artists and is indeed THE trumpet event of the year. They have been held at major universities throughout the world. Sessions are devoted to numerous topics including jazz, symphony orchestra, solo recital, chamber music, pedagogy, history, repertoire, performance practices, acoustics, equipment modifications, physiology, psychology, premieres of new works, and all aspects of the trumpet. The Festival of Trumpets Concert features more than 50 professional trumpeters. The annual ITG Conference also offers a significant opportunity to visit with manufacturers, publishers, and dealers who display instruments, mouthpieces, mutes, accessories, sheet music, books, recordings, and other trumpet related products.

Conferences include student performance competitions for Jazz Improvisation, Solo Performance, and Orchestral Excerpts, and a special competition for younger players. Cash awards for performance competitions are made available by the Karl Kletsch Memorial Fund.