

# Jason Shapiro

tenor and soprano saxophonist/composer/educator



Jason Shapiro has always wanted to share his passion for music with the world – whether through playing the saxophone, composing original music, teaching countless students or leading groups. Inspired by his world-class teachers, great recordings of the past and present, and working with students of all ages, Shapiro continually searches for new approaches to music as well as new ways to share his passion for music with those around him.

Born in Philadelphia, Jason showed an early interest in music. He began piano at age 5 and at the age of 10 began studying saxophone. In high school, while studying with Anthony Ciccarrelli, he began to realize his passion for sharing his music. He started composing, leading groups and performing in his hometown of Haddonfield, NJ. In 1989, enrolled at Indiana University.

While at Indiana, he continued to grow as a composer and as a band leader. He studied jazz saxophone with Thomas Walsh and Malcolm Lynn Baker, and played lead alto in Dominic Spera's big band. He also studied classical saxophone in the undergraduate program under the direction of the eminent Dr. Eugene Rousseau, and composition with Dominic Spera.

Shapiro returned to the east coast after graduation. Under the guidance of Greg Osby and twentieth century composer Ronald Surak, he continued to search for new approaches to improvisation and composition, as well as exploring the relationship between the two. In 2004, he and drummer Skip Rohrich founded 53 Stations, a group committed to performing original compositions and nonstandard jazz. 53 Stations' debut album, "Live in Wilmington," featured some of Philadelphia's top jazz musicians, including Tom Lawton, Bob Meashey and Peter Paulsen. The group's latest CD, "The Hilltop Sessions," features music by Shapiro, Rohrich and bassist Dylan Taylor. Karl Stark of the Philadelphia Inquirer says of the album: "It's gritty uncompromising edge goes down easily, and the original tunes look back to glory days and forward to new vistas."

In 2006, Shapiro went through an unlikely transformation. Having an unexplained desire to try soprano saxophone he borrowed one from a friend. This ended up being a pivotal part of his development. "Soprano really helped me learn who I am as an improviser," he explains. "I began to realize that I was not just a tenor player, but an improviser. The soprano really helped me find my voice."

Jason is currently on the staff at the Shipley School (Bryn Mawr, Penn.), The Friends Central School (Wynnewood, Penn.) and the Wilmington Music School (Wilmington, Del.). He works with students privately and in various ensembles. "I really enjoy teaching," he says. "It is fun to be able to share my ideas of music with people of all different ages and hopefully enrich their lives at the same time."

Jason currently lives in southern New Jersey with his wife and two children.