

Aakash Mittal
Saxophonist, Flutist, Clarinetist, Composer, Educator

Hailed as a “talented young player” with “the skills to go far” by Westword (Denver) and “A fiery alto saxophonist and prolific composer” by the Star Tribune (Minneapolis), Aakash Mittal has been making a name for himself at home and abroad. His debut CD “Possible Beginnings” has been acclaimed as “...simply brilliant.” (Colorado Music Buzz) and “an amazing lineup of all original music.” (Scene Magazine) Mittal has also been praised for having “...the same inventiveness [as author Peter Lavezzoli]...” by Hindustan Times (Kolkata, India). This stems from his approach to composition and improvisation, where Mittal seeks to create music that relates to his diverse background of both American and East Indian heritage, drawing inspiration as much from straight-ahead jazz and the avant-garde as from musical traditions of India and modern grooves.

Aakash Mittal’s primary ensemble, “The Aakash Mittal Quartet,” performs all original music at such Colorado venues as Dazzle Restaurant and Lounge, Bliss Café, Vita, the Ft. Collins Jazz Experience, the UNC Jazz Festival, the Boulder Creek Festival, the Grand Junction Jazz and Arts Festival, and the Estes Park Jazz Festival. In 2009 the quartet toured and performed at the Cultural Center of Chicago, The Dakota Jazz Club in Minneapolis, Box Awesome in Lincoln NE, and Studio 222 in Fargo. He also leads a standards-based jazz duo, a Brazilian duo, and a classical flute and harp duet.

As a sideman Mittal has performed with internationally renowned tabla player Pandit Tanmoy Bose, internationally acclaimed bassist Kai Eckardt, and NY based trumpet player Amir El-Saffar. Other musicians he has performed with include Ratul Shankar, Mainak Nag Chowdhury, and Peter Lavezzoli in Kolkata, India as well as Colorado musicians Greg Harris, Dave Corbus, Gabriel Beach, Matt Fuller, and Andrew Trim. His performance experience also includes playing with the Jared Johnston Trio, the Bill Huston Duo, and the Funk/Rock bands “The Down Unit” and “Voodoo Brown.” Mittal has also performed at “The Speakeasy,” a project combining improvised music with poetry. His pit experience includes the woodwind book for the award winning musical “Urintown” and playing flute in the orchestra for the Loveland Opera Theater’s production of Mozart’s “The Magic Flute.”

As a music educator Mittal has been running a private lessons studio since 2002 and was a faculty member at The Lesson Studio L.L.C. from 2007 through 2008. He has taught jazz and classical approaches to saxophone, clarinet, flute, composition, and music theory. Aakash Mittal gave a workshop on original music and jazz as a guest artist at Concordia College in 2009. He has also taught ensembles, including the Cherry Creek Jazz Band, the Loveland High School saxophone section, the Thompson Valley saxophone and clarinet section, the Windsor High School Clarinet and Flute section, as well as 6th grade woodwind students at Lucille Erwin Middle School, Crest View elementary, Columbine Elementary, Foothills Elementary, Fairview High, University Hill Elementary, Creek side Elementary, and High Peaks Elementary. To develop younger audiences Mittal gave a presentation to first and fifth grade students about Jazz as a guest speaker at Twin Peaks Charter School in Longmont.

Aakash Mittal has composed over 30 pieces for Jazz quartet and was commissioned to write a piece for the “Ethos West” chamber orchestra series that combines the instrumentation of a Jazz sextet with Indian instruments tabla and sitar. To expand his knowledge of the Indian tradition Mittal traveled to Kolkata, India in 2009 and studied Classical Indian music with world renowned artists Pandit Tanmoy Bose and Prattyush Banerjee.

Aakash Mittal received a BM in Saxophone Performance at The University of Colorado at Boulder.