

JUSTIN KAUFLIN

JAZZ PIANIST | COMPOSER | EDUCATOR

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TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

My approach rests on three pillars: Disciplined Craft, Authentic Voice, and Resilient Spirit.

Disciplined Craft: Rigorous technical and harmonic training — voicings, comping, reharmonization, transcription — frees the creative mind. As Quincy Jones noted: "you gotta practice, you gotta put the left-brain work in."

Authentic Voice: Technical skill matters only when placed in service of personal expression. I encourage students to draw on their own experiences as the raw material for musical storytelling — producing original voices, not imitators.

Resilient Spirit: Having lost my sight at age 11 and built a career on the world stage, I understand that the greatest obstacles can become the greatest teachers. I bring that perspective into every session, helping students reframe challenges as opportunities for growth.

SELECT AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Kennedy Center VSA Int'l Young Soloist Award | Semifinalist **Thelonious Monk International** Piano Competition | "**Jazz Artist of the Year**" VEER Magazine | Dedication — **#1 Jazz Week** | Composer & featured artist, Oscar short-listed documentary **Keep On Keepin' On** | **Yamaha Artist** | Management by **Quincy Jones**

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Faculty (2021-present) — Governor's School for the Arts, VA - Serving advanced high school-level performing arts students (Jazz Instrumental Music)

Masterclass & Clinic Instructor (2014 to present) — University Level - VCU Jazz | USC Jazz | University of Arkansas | William Paterson University | Notre Dame Collegiate

Select Panel Discussions - Jazz Congress, Jazz at Lincoln Center, NYC | NAMM - Accessible Music Technology, CA

Select Jazz Festivals & Workshops - Notre Dame Jazz, Vail Jazz, Monterey Jazz, Lionel Hampton Jazz, Jazz Maui Summer Camps, Centrum Jazz, DR Jazz, International workshops in Denmark, Latvia, Republic of Georgia, Mexico

SELECT DISCOGRAPHY

Justin Kauflin Trio: Live at Sam First (vinyl, digital) | **Danish Rain** CD | **Flow Freely** (w/Jacob Collier) | **Coming Home** CD | **Silent Night** CD | **Dedication** CD #1 Jazz Week | **Introducing Justin Kauflin** debut CD

FILM, MEDIA & COMPOSITIONS

Keep On Keepin' On — Oscar short-listed documentary; composer & featured artist | **My Sister Liv** — Full-length documentary score | **Reflection — A Walk with Water** — Full-length documentary score | **12 Notes on Life and Creativity by Quincy Jones** — Trailer score | **Blue's Big City Adventure** — Nickelodeon | **Nespresso** Ad | The Today Show | The Queen Latifah Show | NPR StoryCorps | NPR Song Travels | 100+ original compositions across music & film

SELECT PERFORMANCES

Virginia / Hampton Roads - Chrysler Museum, ODU, Winter Blues & Jazz, The Tin Pan, Reveler, Zeiders, Sandler Center, Havana Nights

National & International - Lincoln Center, Jazz Standard, Monterey Jazz, Disney Hall, Kennedy Center, Library of Congress, Gilmore Keyboard Fest, Blue Note Tokyo, Montreux Jazz Fest, Ronnie Scott's, Vail Jazz, Blue Note Milan, Jazzhus Montmartre, Java Jazz Fest, Abu Dhabi Fest, Oscar Peterson Tribute

SELECT PRESS

2023 DownBeat Magazine *"Justin Kauflin's Live Adventure"*

2016 Los Angeles Times *"Jazz pianist Justin Kauflin draws from faith to his swinging interpretations"*

2015 New York Times *"A rare musical mentorship captured with heart and soul"*

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Music, Jazz Studies Honors College — Summa Cum Laude - William Paterson University, NJ (2008)

Classical violin & piano training: Performing jazz professionally by age 14

Publications: The Development of Jazz Education in the United States: Its Expansion and Key Contributors (2006)