

Joel Spencer

Professional Musician

Music Educator

As a testament to Joel Spencer's performance skills, a great number of musical relationships developed into offers to tour the U.S. and Europe performing with major artists such as pianist Earl "Fatha" Hines, guitarist Barney Kessel, bassist Eddie Gomez, trumpet artists Red Rodney, Clark Terry, Chet Baker, Freddie Hubbard, saxophonists Sonny Stitt, Benny Golson, Joe Henderson, Eddie Harris, Wayne Shorter, David Liebman, pianists Hank Jones and Cedar Walton.

As a professional Joel has performed with a diverse variety of musical artists. Whether the call was for an extended engagement with the Count Basie Orchestra at the upscale Rainbow Grill in NYC, a filmed performance with jazz vocalist Eddie Jefferson, a national TV appearance with vocalist Barbra Streisand, or a soundtrack for a major motion picture featuring pop vocalist Barry Manilow, the highest level of instrumental virtuosity and musical versatility was required of Spencer in each of these demanding musical environments.

Joel's formal training as a percussionist (paired with drum set performance) has resulted in numerous appearances with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra featuring such artists as vocal stylist Michael Feinstein, Broadway vocalists Patti Lupone and Kristin Chenoweth, trumpeter Doc Severinsen, and featured performance and recording dates with former Chicago Symphony conductor and world-renowned piano recitalist Daniel Barenboim.

From 1985-2005 Spencer greatly succeeded in the competitive studio recording industry in Chicago where he recorded hundreds of national TV product commercials, movie soundtracks, and over 50 nationally/internationally released jazz recordings.

At present, Joel's efforts as a recognized artist-clinician is actively supported by Zildjian Cymbals, Gretsch Drums, and Regal Tip Sticks & Brushes- for whom he serves as an Endorsement Artist. In addition, Joel currently serves as a full-time Assistant Professor of Music in the highly acclaimed Jazz Studies Program at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Joel Spencer's career as a jazz artist continues to provide him with an extensive palette of performances and recordings, as he has performed with artists from virtually *every* era and genre of jazz.