

# Zachary D. Varner

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## EDUCATION

- University of Texas**, Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA), Jazz Performance 2015  
*Lecture Recital Document: Down the "Rabbit" Hole: A Musical Examination of Alto Saxophonist Johnny Hodges*
- University of Illinois**, Master of Music (MM), Jazz Performance 2012  
*Master's Thesis: Julian "Cannonball" Adderley in the late 1950's: An Examination of the Alto Saxophonist's Improvisational Development*
- Columbus State University**, Bachelor of Arts in Music (BA), Saxophone Performance 2005

## RECENT PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

### Finalist – FMC International Film Scoring Competition

2022 (*video game division*) for original music to "Die by the Blade"

### High School Education Community Outreach

Featured in a series of interviews entitled "Conversations Between Generations" with LBJ High School jazz students, as part of the May 2021 issue of LBJ-LASA Jazz Magazine.

### Film Scores

Composed original music for the short film *Downbeat!* (Treadwell Productions).

Featured performer on the film score of *Sister Aimee*, (Kill Claudio Productions) by composer Graham Reynolds.

### 2019 Festival Showcases

The Zack Varner Quartet performed at the renowned South by Southwest music festival, as well as the Uplift Jazz Festival. Both events were held in March of 2019 in Austin, Texas.

### International Jazz Festivals

Performed as a featured artist in the summer of 2018 at the Santo Domingo, Copenhagen and Aarhus Jazz Festivals.

### Solo Album Release

Composed, produced, crowdfunded and self-released a full-length album of original compositions. Released in January of 2018, *Blues in the Nude* has received positive reviews from two acclaimed jazz critics.

### Recent Performance Highlights (*selected from performance experience list below*)

Performed in concert with the Texas Horns, Red Young, Christian Wiggs Big Band, Extreme Heat, the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, the Austin Symphony, the Doc Watkins Orchestra, Jennifer Holliday, Joshua Redman, Maria Schneider, Laura Otero, and Andre Hayward.

### ***CLINICS, WORKSHOPS AND SUMMER CAMPS***

<b>Colony High School Band Camp, Lewisville, TX</b> Saxophone Clinician	2018
<b>Sommergroove Music Camp, Knivsberg, Denmark</b> Saxophone Instructor, Jazz, Pop, Commercial Music Combo Coach, Lecturer	2017-2018
<b>University of Texas Summer Jazz Improvisation Camp, Austin, TX</b> Jazz Saxophone Instructor, Faculty Concerts and Masterclass	2013-2015
<b>In the Shed Jazz Camp, Austin, TX</b> Jazz Saxophone Instructor, Combo Coach, Lecturer in Jazz History	2014
<b>Jazz Composition Lecture Series</b> (Thompson Conference Center, University of Texas)	2013

### **HONORS, AWARDS AND AFFILIATIONS**

Finalist in the FMC International Film Scoring Competition	2022
President of the Longhorn Jazz Association (University of Texas)	2013-2014
Eleanor Alexander Stribling Award for Excellence in Jazz Studies (University of Texas)	2014
Co-Founder of the Student Initiated New Music Ensemble "TV Buddha" (University of Illinois)	2011
Fine Arts Fellowship (University of Illinois)	2010
Concerto Competition Winner (Columbus State University)	2004
International Association of Jazz Educators Festival Award (for study at an IAJE jazz camp)	2004
Outstanding Soloist Award (Downhome Jazz Festival, Dothan, AL)	2003
Student Advisory Council Representative (Columbus State University)	2001-2004

### **PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE**

*(selected artists, ensembles and performances from 2000 to present)*

#### ***JAZZ/BLUES POP, ROCK, LATIN***

Christian Wiggs Big Band	2022-2023
Red Young and Tenor Madness	2022
The Texas Horns	2021
The Dirty River Orchestra	2020
Austin Symphony Jazz Band, Austin TX	2014-Present

Tonic Big Band (Elephant Room Jazz Club, Monthly Residency)	2015-Present
Doc Watkins Orchestra, San Antonio, TX	2018-Present
Juliet Live Jazz Series, KUTX Radio, Austin, TX (Zack Varner Quartet)	2018-Present
Extreme Heat	2019
Copenhagen Jazz Festival, Copenhagen, Denmark (Zack Varner Quartet)	2018
Aarhus Jazz Festival, Aarhus, Denmark (Zack Varner Quartet)	2018
Santo Domingo Jazz Festival, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (Zack Varner Quartet)	2018
Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, Corpus Christi, TX (Lead Alto Saxophone)	2018
Lindyfest, Houston, TX (Brooks Prumo Orchestra)	2017, 2018
Sahara Swingtet, Austin, TX (Weekly Club Residency at the Sahara Lounge)	2015-2017
Austin Lindy Exchange, Austin, TX (Craig Gildner Big Band)	2016
Hot Rhythm Holiday, Austin, TX (Brooks Prumo Orchestra, Waller Creek Vipers)	2016
Harvest Moon Ball, Houston, TX Swing (Waller Creek Vipers)	2016
KUTX Live Radio Performance, Austin, TX (w/ Laura Otero)	2015
Laura Otero, Austin, TX (clarinet, soprano and alto saxophonist)	2014-2015
Castellanos Quartet, Austin, TX (Weekly Residency at "W" Hotel)	2013-2015
Lead Alto Saxophonist for the UT Jazz Orchestra (University of Texas)	2012-2014
Member of AIME Student Composers Performance Ensemble (University of Texas)	2012-2014
Longhorn Jazz Festival, Austin, TX (Joshua Redman and UTJO)	2014
Floyd Domino, Austin, TX (Western Swing)	2014
Longhorn Jazz Festival, Austin, TX (Maria Schneider and UTJO)	2013
Beto y Los Fairlanes (three performances)	2013
Jazz Education Network Conference, Louisville, KY (U of I Concert Jazz Band)	2012
Member of the Concert Jazz Band (University of Illinois)	2011-2012
Midwest Music Conference, Chicago, IL (University of Illinois Concert Jazz Band)	2011
Lead Alto Saxophonist for Jim Pugh's Jazz Repertoire Band (University of Illinois)	2010
Centennial Tribute to Johnny Mercer, Atlanta, GA (feat. Joe Gransden and Lizz Wright)	2009
Jerry Bergonzi (Georgia State University Jazz Band)	2009
Jungol, Atlanta, GA (Songwriter, Multi-Instrumentalist, Touring Band Member)	2005-2009
Midatlantic Music Conference, Charlotte, NC (Liquid Jungle Industry Showcase)	2006
Auburn Knights Jazz Orchestra, Auburn, AL (Lead Tenor Sax )	2002-2004

### ***CHAMBER, SYMPHONIC, MUSICAL THEATER***

"Chaplin," Marble Falls, TX (Reed 2, 4 performances)	2022
"Tuck Everlasting," Marble Falls, TX (Reed 2, 4 performances)	2020
Austin Symphony, Austin, TX "Singin in the Rain"	2019
"Annie," TexArts Productions, Austin, TX (Reed 1, 26 performances)	2019
Austin Symphony, Austin, TX (Sinatra Tribute Concert)	2018
"Smokey Joe's Café," TexArts Productions, Austin, TX (Reed 1, 15 performances)	2018
"In the Heights," ZACH Theater, Austin, TX (Reed 1, 36 performances)	2017
"Singin' in the Rain" ZACH Theater, Austin, TX (Reed 1, 35 performances)	2017
"The Drowsy Chaperone," University of Texas, Austin, TX (Reed 2, 14 performances)	2017
"Les Misérables," St. Andrews Episcopal School, Austin, TX (Reed 1, 10 performances)	2015
"Sophisticated Ladies," ZACH Theater, Austin, TX (Reed 1, 30 performances)	2015
"The Wild Party," University of Texas, Austin, TX (Reed1, 17 performances)	2015
"Chicago," Half and Half Productions, Austin, TX (Reed 2, 15 performances)	2014

“Little Shop of Horrors,” Zilker Theater Productions, Austin, TX (Reed 1, 25 performances)	2013
TV Buddha, University of Illinois, Champaign, IL, (Student-Initiated New Music Ensemble)	2010-2011
Columbus State University Saxophone Quartet, Columbus, GA	2001-2005
Soloist with the Columbus State University Orchestra, Columbus, GA	2004
LaGrange Symphony, LaGrange, GA	2002-2004
CBDNA Music Conference, Minneapolis-St Paul, MN (CSU Wind Ensemble)	2003
“The Three Penny Opera,” Columbus State University, Columbus, GA (Reed 2, 10 performances)	2002

## COMPOSING AND ARRANGING EXPERIENCE

### Composed and arranged music for:

Short Films and Music Library cues	2018-present
The Zack Varner Quartet	2012-2018
The Sahara Swingtet	2015-2018
The Brooks Prumo Orchestra (swing band)	2017
The N.O.W. Jazz Orchestra (New Original Works)	2015
University of Texas Jazz Orchestra	2012-2014
A.I.M.E (Alternative Improvisation Music Ensemble)	2012-2014
Joshua Redman (with UT Jazz Orchestra)	2014
University of Illinois Concert Jazz Band	2011-2012
Jungol (Experimental Rock Ensemble)	2005-2009
Columbus State University Jazz Ensemble	2003-2005

## RELATED SKILLS AND PROFICIENCIES

### Piano Proficiency

15+ years of experience in Jazz, Rock and Popular Styles

### Guitar Proficiency

20+ years of experience in Jazz, Rock, Folk, Bluegrass and Popular Styles

### Woodwind Doubling Proficiency

Flute and Clarinet, 10+ years of experience

### Audio Engineering

Proficient in Common DAW Software, 5+ years of experience

### Music Engraving

Expert in Finale Software, 15+ years of experience

### Fundraising

Completed the Launch and Release Crowdfunding Music Course and Administrated a Successful Kickstarter Campaign

## DISCOGRAPHY/RECORDING CREDITS

<b><i>Sister Aimee</i> (A Kill Claudio Productions film, score by Graham Reynolds)</b> Alto Saxophone and Clarinet	2021
<b><i>UH-HUH, Choctaw Wildfire</i></b> Tenor Saxophone, Clarinet	2021
<b><i>Back Home, Jo James Band</i></b> Tenor Saxophone	2019
<b><i>Midnight Dealin', Jo James Band</i></b> Tenor Saxophone	2019
<b><i>Blues in the Nude, Zack Varner</i></b> Bandleader, Composer, Producer, Alto and Tenor Saxophone	2018
<b><i>Merry Christmas from Austin, Mark Schaeffgen</i></b> Alto Saxophone and Clarinet	2017
<b><i>Pass the Bounce, Brooks Prumo Orchestra</i></b> Arranger	2017
<b><i>Frigga Feetless &amp; Friends, Kristoffer Gori Verdoner (Denmark)</i></b> Alto Saxophone	2015
<b><i>From Noche to Night, Laura Otero (Destiny Records)</i></b> Alto Saxophone and Clarinet	2015
<b><i>Cloverdale, Grizzly Adams Family</i></b> Tenor Saxophone	2015
<b><i>Mine to Give, Brady Allen</i></b> Alto and Tenor Saxophone	2014
<b><i>Places, Jungol</i></b> Songwriter, Co-Producer, Saxophone, Guitar, Keyboards, Vocals	2009
<b><i>Tiny Heaven, Liquid Jungle</i></b> Songwriter, Co-Producer, Saxophone, Guitar, Keyboards, Vocals	2007
<b><i>Journey, Columbus State University Wind Ensemble (Summit Recordings)</i></b> Alto Saxophone	2004
<b><i>Wind Legacy, Columbus State University Wind Ensemble (Summit Recordings)</i></b> Alto Saxophone	2003

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- Borsody, Alex. "Jungol: *Tiny Heaven*." Review of *Tiny Heaven* by Jungol. *JamBase*, July 11, 2008.
- Ferris, Lindsey. "8 Austinites to catch at the 2019 SXSW Music Festival." *The Daily Texan*, March 8, 2019.
- Hernandez, Raoul. "New Austin Music Worth Your Bandwidth This Week." *The Austin Chronicle*, June 11, 2021.
- "Jazz Story, Featuring Zack Varner." Radio Broadcast. *99.5: Radio Campus Tours*, January 23, 2018.
- Steinberger, Jeremy. "Zack Varner: *Blues in the Nude*." Review of *Blues in the Nude*, by Zack Varner. *The Austin Chronicle*, Aug. 24, 2018.
- Tucker, Mark S. "Liquid Jungle: *Tiny Heaven*." Review of *Tiny Heaven* by Jungol. *Folk and Acoustic Music Exchange*, 2008.
- Varner, Zack. "Casa de Teatro Presents: the Zack Varner Quartet." Interview by César Namnún. *96.1 - Quisqueya FM*, July 5, 2018.
- Varner, Zack. "Santo Domingo Jazz Festival Presenta a Zack Varner." Interview by Fernando Rodriguez. *Jazz en Dominicana*, July 2, 2018.
- Wilson, Matt. "Young People, Big Dreams." *Cherokee Living Magazine*, 2007.
- Yanow, Scott. "Zack Varner: *Blues in the Nude*." Review of *Blues in the Nude*, by Zack Varner. *Los Angeles Jazz Scene*, July 2018.

## MASTERCLASSES, LESSONS AND WORKSHOPS

Chucho Valdes (University of Texas Masterclass)	2014
Joshua Redman (University of Texas Masterclasses)	2014
Maria Schneider (University of Texas Masterclasses)	2013
Jim Snidero (University of Illinois Masterclass)	2012
Jerry Bergonzi (Georgia State University Masterclass and Saxophone Lesson)	2010
Bob Reynolds (Georgia State University Masterclass and Saxophone Lesson)	2010
Dave Pietro (Jazz Combo Instruction, Saxophone Masterclass and Saxophone Lessons)	2004
University of Missouri-St.Louis Jazz Summer Camp (Jazz Combo and Saxophone Lessons)	2004
James Houlik (Columbus State University Masterclass)	2003
Kim Richmond (Columbus State University Masterclasses)	2003
Patrick Meighan (Columbus State University Masterclass)	2003
Bobby McFerrin (Columbus State University Masterclass)	2002
Wessell Anderson (Columbus State University Jazz Band Masterclass)	2002
Kenneth Fischer (University of Georgia Janfest Masterclass and Saxophone Lessons)	2000

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

ASCAP

## REFERENCES

Available upon request