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WWW.POSI-TONE.COM
POSITONERECORDS@GMAIL.COM

Alexa Tarantino biography

Alexa Tarantino is an award-winning, vibrant, young jazz saxophonist, woodwind doubler, composer, and educator. Her newest album is **Clarity** (Posi-Tone 2020), and features an evocative display of talent over a wide range of instruments. Tarantino clearly demonstrates that her skills in songwriting and performance are elevating and shining steadily with bright moments. Tarantino is focused as a bandleader and relaxed as a soloist in front of the rhythm section of pianist Steven Feifke, bassist Joe Martin, and drummer Rudy Royston.

The New York Times says Tarantino has a “lovely, ardent way of improvising,” and has “sharply plotted but gracefully unencumbered straight-ahead jazz compositions.” Tarantino was named one of the “Top 5 Alto Saxophonists of 2019” by the *JazzTimes* Critics’ Poll, and her debut album, **Winds of Change** (Posi-Tone 2019), peaked at #15 on the *JazzWeek* weekly charts and landed at #79 for *JazzWeek*’s top records of 2019.

Tarantino performs and tours regularly as a leader and sidemusician in a wide variety of ensembles and genres, including the Cecile McLorin Salvant Quintet, Cecile McLorin Salvant’s OGRESSE Ensemble, Ulysses Owens Jr.’s Generation Y, LSAT (quintet co-led with baritone saxophonist Lauren Sevian), Arturo O’Farrill & The Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra, Sherrie Maricle & the DIVA Jazz Orchestra.

Tarantino is currently on faculty for Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Youth Programs (High School Jazz Academy, Let Freedom Swing/Jazz for Young People) and represents the organization as a Clinician and Educator for various schools, festivals, and workshops. She holds a Master’s degree in Jazz Studies from The Juilliard School and Bachelor’s degrees in Jazz Saxophone Performance and Music Education from the Eastman School of Music. Tarantino is also the Founder and Director of the Rockport Jazz Workshop in Rockport, Massachusetts. Tarantino is a Vandoren Artist and Yamaha Performing Artist.