

“[Alexa is] a one-woman wrecking crew, [...] an indomitable force for expression, education, and absolute excellence.” - Wynton Marsalis, *Managing and Artist Director, Jazz at Lincoln Center*

Alexa Tarantino is an award-winning, vibrant, young jazz saxophonist, woodwind doubler, composer, and educator. Alexa’s “lovely, ardent way of improvising,” and “sharply plotted but gracefully unencumbered straight-ahead jazz [compositions]” (*The New York Times*) establish her individual voice which shines through as a dynamic performer and educator. Tarantino was recently named one of the “Top 5 Alto Saxophonists of 2019” by the *JazzTimes* Critics’ Poll and nominated as a “Rising Star - Alto Saxophone” by Downbeat Magazine’s 2020 Critics’ Poll.

Tarantino has played prestigious venues such as Jazz in Marciac Festival (with Wynton Marsalis and the Young Stars of Jazz), Umbria Jazz Festival (with Ryan Truesdell’s *Gil Evans Project*), the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, the Hollywood Bowl (with Sherrie Maricle & the DIVA Jazz Orchestra), the Rockport Jazz Festival (Alexa Tarantino Quintet), Rose Theater at Jazz at Lincoln Center and the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (with Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra), and the Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival (with LSAT, Earth, Wind & Fire and others).

She has performed regularly as a leader and sidewoman 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, the Alexa Tarantino Quartet. *Firefly*, Alexa’s third record for Posi-Tone Records released April 30, 2021. Her previous album, *Clarity*, peaked at #9 on the JazzWeek Charts and landed at #54 for JazzWeek’s Top 100 records of 2019.

Tarantino is currently on faculty for Jazz at Lincoln Center's Youth Education Programs and directs one of their High School Jazz Academy big bands. She has also taken on a larger role in JALC’s Jazz for Young People Program, bringing music to New York City schools. Previously, she served as Jazz Saxophone Instructor at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Tarantino continues to visit several colleges, high schools, and summer jazz programs across the globe as a guest clinician, including the Rockport Jazz Workshop (MA), of which she is Founder and Director. She is also Co-Founder of A Step Ahead Jazz with pianist Steven Feifke. In February 2021, Alexa launched her new virtual community-style jazz education platform, *The Alexa Approach*.

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 a graduate of Hall High School’s award-winning music program in West Hartford, Connecticut and currently resides in New York City.

Alexa Tarantino is a Vandoren Artist and Yamaha Performing Artist.

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