

# JONATHAN SARAGA

Trumpeter | Flugelhornist | Composer | Arranger | Producer | Educator | Doctor of Musical Arts  
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## Statement of Teaching Philosophy

I began teaching private lessons after completing my Master of Music degree in 2011, and after working as a music teacher for six New-York-area based music intensive programs, as well as Graduate Part-Time Instructor for six college semesters, I've come to understand that serving as an educator, teacher and mentor is part of my life's purpose. The core of my passion as an educator is to not only guide students toward realizing their own potentials as musicians, artists and complete human beings, but also to help enable *them* to visualize their *own* growth and potential. To do that, I aim to construct learning environments which nurture self-discovery through guidance, as opposed to environments which dictate how students should develop and/or perceive material.

My approach to the teaching of music is influenced by nearly seventeen years immersion within jazz-academia, adapting and synthesizing wisdom and knowledge shared by Todd Coolman, Jeff Coffin, Hal Galper, Tyshawn Sorey, Brad Goode, Art Lande, and many other master teaching artists. Throughout my three years of teaching for the Thompson Jazz Studies program at the University of Colorado Boulder, I became passionate about creative music-education reform, discussing different approaches to the study of jazz within academic environments, often with educators, but also with students. To me, the entirety of a student's experience in a creative music program should be holistic, whereby courses not only include elements of performance pedagogy, artistic development, and socio-cultural engagement, but that they also interact with each other, creating a curriculum that breaths and evolves.

Finding ways to be of service to others is ultimately my goal as a human being, as a performer of music, and also as an educator. In the context of jazz academia, that approach translates toward helping a person reach their goals as a jazz artist and musician. Since many people have different ideas of what that looks like, I treat each engagement with each student uniquely, and find balance in teaching from a place of love and

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simultaneously high standards. Many greats have spoken the phrase ‘take care of the music, and the music will take care of you’, a phrase that includes both love *and* sacrifice. I have high standards for my students, because the world has high standards for those who wish to succeed, however I am as generous as possible with my time and knowledge, in order to help them meet those standards. To help instill this type of relationship with my students, rather than fostering an environment of pre-determined hierarchy between myself and them, I chose to co-create one with them, based on the sharing of mutually perceived values, concepts, and ideas. This non-fear-based approach to learning and career preparation caters to one my premier goals of teaching within academia—to prepare a student for the ‘real’ world, but with a humility that transcends the illusions of material or financial success.

I estimate that I have accumulated close to 40,000 cumulative hours of practice, listening, composing, performing and recording over the past 20 years, with 95% of it occurring while been based out of the New York area—one of the highest-level musical environments on earth. It is my hope is to share the experience, knowledge and wisdom I have acquired over the years, through sharing my love of learning, leading by example, promoting self-expression, individuality, creativity, excellence, as well as mutual respect.