

## AARON J. JOHNSON



Born in Washington, D.C. Johnson studied piano and drums before taking up the trombone at age 12. While in high school, Aaron frequently performed with area funk bands. He also conducted and arranged for student ensembles under the direction of noted trumpeter Peter D. Ford. It was Ford who gave the budding young talent his first professional gigs and introduced him to Ellington alumni, bandleader and alto saxophonist Rick Henderson.

While pursuing degrees in electrical engineering, Johnson remained active as a trombonist and bass trombonist throughout his college years. He had the good fortune to play with the University of Pittsburgh Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Nathan Davis and Kenny Clarke. Following college, Aaron continued to gig in the D.C. and New York areas, studying privately with reed multi-instrumentalist Makanda Ken McIntyre.

By the early 1990's Johnson established himself as an experienced and valuable sideman, composer, and arranger. He has since recorded and performed with a multitude of major artists and ensembles to include Reggie Workman, Jimmy Heath, Charles Tolliver, Oliver Lake, Muhal Richard Abrams, Bill Lee, Frank Lacy, Jay-Z, Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight, The Mingus Big Band, the Count Basie Orchestra, Steve Turre's Sanctified Shells, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, and the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra.

A recipient of the New Jersey State Council Fellowship in Music Composition (2000) Aaron Johnson has composed and arranged works performed or recorded by Frank Foster, Steve Turre, Frank Lacy, the Nancie Banks Orchestra, and Paradigm Shift. He has been featured in film scores (The Bulls Night Out 1997) (Anna Oz 1996) television commercials, and several public radio broadcasts. Currently Johnson is in the doctoral program in Musicology at Columbia University and has recently released his acclaimed solo debut album *Songs of Our Fathers*.

*This is one of the best CD's I've heard in a long time.*

*Maxx Myrick  
President  
MaxxJazzHouse*

*"AJ's keen knowledge of the music has enabled him to weave an excellent body of work, and here it is"*

*-Charles Tolliver*