

MATT JENSON

Pianist/Multi Keyboardist • Composer/Arranger • Educator • Producer

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PROFILE

Pianist/multi keyboardist and educator with 25 years on the piano faculty at Berklee College of Music (Boston). Specialist in jazz and blues piano, Caribbean music (reggae/dub), and Afro-Cuban/montuno-based piano, with an emerging ambient/minimalist/neo classical practice bridging acoustic piano with electronic sound design and hybrid live performance workflows. Active touring, recording, and producing musician; composer, arranger, and vocalist.

EDUCATION

M.M., Jazz Composition — New England Conservatory of Music

December 1991

Studied with Geri Allen, Ran Blake, and Dave Holland

B.A., Psychology — University of New Hampshire

May 1987

Additional studies:

Eddie Palmieri (piano); Donna McElroy and Jeannie Gagne (vocals); Loudon Stearns and Kai Turnbull (music electronics)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Professor of Piano — Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA

[Faculty profile on Berklee website](#)

2001–present

- Private piano instruction: jazz, blues, R&B, neo-soul, gospel, Afro-Cuban, reggae, and pop/rock styles, plus composition, arranging, theory and technique.
- Created “The Music and Life of Bob Marley,” a popular performance-studies class and ensemble (see “Notable Activities – Reggae and Caribbean Music” below)
- Ensemble coaching in any of the above styles
- Blues approach to teaching improvisation with extensive self-created study guide that is easily applied to nearly all pop styles
- Latin piano lab: Afro-Cuban, montuno-based technique with extensive self-created study guide
- Hammond organ labs: rock, jazz, pop, gospel, funk, and reggae styles
- Jazz and pop/rock comping, intermediate and advanced levels
- Curriculum design with highly effective and thorough study guides including the guides mentioned above and additional guides: ‘How to Swing,’ ‘Jazz II V I progressions,’ ‘Walking bass lines,’ ‘Rock Hammond organ licks,’ Modes and scales for improvisation,’ ‘Spread and drop 2 voicings’
- Rhythm section ensemble, Levels I & II
- Sight-reading labs, Levels I & II
- Basic piano labs for non-pianists
- Theory and Sight-Reading, 5-Week Summer Performance Program (mostly High School aged students)
- Member of the Audition & Interview team for prospective students

Adjunct Professor — The Jazz School (part of the California Jazz Conservatory), Berkeley, CA 2006–2024

- Presented the “Music and Life of Bob Marley” as 5 and 3-day intensives
- Taught classes and coached ensembles in Caribbean and Afro-Cuban styles

Faculty Member — Jazz Camp West, Oakland/La Honda, CA

2007, 2009, 2013, 2016, 2019, 2024

- Presented “Music and Life of Bob Marley,” Latin piano lab, blues piano lab, and a reggae-jazz ensemble

Piano Instructor and Ensemble Coach — Redwood High School, Larkspur, CA

2019

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (*other than Berklee College of Music*)

Freelance Musician — Keyboardist, Composer, Arranger, Vocalist, Drummer, Bandleader 1980–present

- Bandleader: ¡Combo Sabroso!, Rebel Tumbao, Liquid Revolution, Mix Up Mix Up, Unmarked Routes
- Sideman performances/recordings, regionally, nationally, and internationally, with the Bay Area reggae-jazz fusion band Groundation. Performances/recordings with Ronnie Earl and the Broadcasters, Mighty Sam McClain, Johnny Adams, Judy Mowatt, Cyril Lance, Julien Kasper

Music Producer 2014–present

- Production services including composition, arrangement, recording, engineering, mixing, and graphic design
- Artists produced: Beantown Social Club (Afro-Cuban); Kelley B and Hot Like Fire (Reggae/Caribbean); Rebel Tumbao (Afro-Latin/Roots reggae); Liquid Revolution (Reggae); Groundation (Reggae-Jazz fusion); Unmarked Routes (Ambient/Neo classical/Minimalist)

Freelance Graphic Design and Video Production 1999–present

- Print and digital promotional materials; website design; ongoing music-educational and artistic video production, primarily for artofreggae.com and Unmarked Routes, occasionally for private clients

Public Relations Coordinator — GM Recordings, Newton Centre, MA 1993–1995

- PR for an independent jazz/classical label owned by Gunther Schuller; regional and national radio/press promotion; one-sheets, press releases, and catalogue redesign

Arts Administrator — Cambridge Arts Council, Cambridge, MA 1993–1995

- Assistant to the Community Arts Director

CURRENT ARTISTIC DIRECTION — UNMARKED ROUTES

With the intention to create expansive dematerialized atmospheres of awe and fascination, Unmarked Routes is a quasi-ambient, neo classical, cinematic, dub project that merges acoustic instruments (piano, strings, woodwinds, voice) with electronic sound design, dance, avant garde minimalist screen art, integrating into an Ableton Live hybrid performance set up. Influences include Brian Eno, Nils Frahm, Hania Rani, King Tubby/Scratch Perry, Sade, Igor Stravinsky. A debut album has been completed and is scheduled for release in 2026.

www.mattjenson.com www.unmarkedroutes.com

- Recipient of the Guilford Sound Faculty Development Recording Residency Summer, 2024
(awarded by Berklee College of Music)— six days recording an album for string quartet, woodwinds, voice, piano, and electronics at [Guilford Sound](#)
- Recipient of the Charles and Joan Family Foundation composition grant 2025
- Live rig includes Ableton Live running on a Macbook Pro, Ableton Push 3, ASM Hydrasynth Deluxe, Moog Muse, Moog Subsequent 37, Arturia MiniFreak, Boss RC505 MK II looper, two grid controllers, a vocal processor, Strymon El Capitan and Line 6 DL4 MK II delay pedals, various hand percussion instruments and an acoustic and digital piano.

SELECTED RECORDINGS & PERFORMANCES

Unmarked Routes (Matt Jenson) original ambient, neo classical, dub piano with electronics, 2026
string quartet, woodwinds and voice (debut recording to be released 2026)

One Rock (Groundation) (10th album): horn/string arrangements, co-composition, 2018-2022
and nearly all keyboard parts. Toured Europe, Brazil, California, Hawaii

Virus Among Us — award-winning (Music in Place, San Francisco) collaborative music video: 2020
composer, video/audio production

Rebel Tumbao — self-titled album: Afro-Cuban arrangements of Bob Marley's music and originals; 2014
composer, arranger, lyricist, all keyboards

Dragonfly Taxi (Matt Jenson/Liquid Revolution) original reggae; lead/backing vocals, 2013
composer, lyricist, arranger

Air Craft Music Library — two albums (Latin and Southern Rock styles) for commercial music library 2007

Flipping Time and self-titled album (Julien Kasper) — Hammond organ 2005

- Stranger in My House and Live From the Outskirts (Cyril Lance)** — Hammond organ, piano 2002, 2005
- One Drops, Spirituals and Riddim (Matt Jenson)** — original reggae-jazz: keyboards, vocals 1998
- Voices From the Heart / Con Tutti** — Accompanist, women's and mixed choruses, Portsmouth, NH 2000–present
- Toured Puerto Rico, South Africa, and Scotland; produced video/audio for two pandemic-era virtual performances

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES — REGGAE & CARIBBEAN MUSIC

- The Music and Life of Bob Marley performance studies class and ensemble** 2002–present
- A 14-piece, by-audition, 2-credit performance studies class where students not only play full, charted arrangements of Marley songs but also learn about Jamaican pre and post-colonial history, about Rastafari, about Cold War geo politics and how it was played-out on the streets of Kingston in the 1970's (with a critical look at Capitalism and Socialism) and about how all of it was expressed through the poetic, revolutionary music that Bob Marley and his musicians created. *(All arrangements, for about 40 songs, were written by Matt Jenson.)*
 - Instrumentation: electric bass, drumset, 2 keyboards, 2 guitars, 4 singers, trumpet, trombone, tenor sax, 2 hand percussion. Additional instruments included: violin, steel pan, flute, mandolin, alto sax, dub effects specialist and vocally, rappers

The Art of Reggae — Recipient, Berklee Newbury Comics Faculty Fellowship 2016
for development of an online platform teaching reggae keyboard and guitar with cultural grounding (see 'Other' below)

- Cultural/musical immersion research trips to Jamaica** 2003, 2004, 2006, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2025
- Funded by multiple Berklee Faculty Development Grants and by Matt Jenson
 - Interviews and jam sessions with members of Bob Marley's inner circle, family, and other legendary and working reggae musicians; clinics and performances given at the Edna Manley School; featured in the Jamaican Observer and on various Jamaican radio broadcasts; exploring possible formal educational partnerships between Berklee and the Alpha Boys' School; co-leader of two cultural immersion trips titled 'Inside Reggae' (See 'Other' below)

[Interviewed for BBC piece on Bob Marley by poet Lemn Sissay](#) 2016

Presenter, Moshito Music Conference and Exhibition, Johannesburg, South Africa 2009
Presented workshops on how to create effective websites for independent musicians. Conducted research on South African music and the Apartheid struggle

Guest Speaker, Africa Unite 2006 Celebration, Ghana 2006
Invited by Rita Marley and Rita Marley Foundation to deliver a talk entitled, "Music Is More Than Music: Bob Marley and Education"; auditioned Ghanaian students to receive scholarships to Berklee's 5-Week Summer Program

Professional performances, Berklee Bob Marley Ensemble 2002-2025
Generating professional performance experiences for students in the Bob Marley class/ensemble.
Montreal International Reggae Festival, Vermont Reggae Festival, Charlemont Reggae Festival, Berklee Performance Center, House of Blues (Boston), Harvard Divinity School, Roxbury Community College, Salem Jazz and Soul Festival, South Shore Conservatory, Regent Theater, Amazing Things Arts Center, The Cut, and clubs throughout New England

PUBLICATIONS

- "Bubblin': The Rhythmic Adventures of a Groove Keyboardist" — Berklee Today** Spring 2015
<https://www.berklee.edu/berklee-today/spring-2015/The-Woodshed-Bubblin>
- "Soul Rebel, Natural Mystic" (feature on the life of Bob Marley) — Berklee Today** Fall 2003
<https://www.berklee.edu/berklee-today/fall-2003/bob-marley>
- "Marley at 60" and "Reggae Goes to College" — Beat Magazine** 2003, 2005
- "MIDI and the Soul of Music" and "Interview with Chester Thompson" — MIDI Magazine** 1994, 1995

SKILLS & TECHNICAL PROFICIENCIES

Music Production & Sound Design

Ableton Live, Ableton Push 3, Logic, GarageBand; Moog Muse, Subsequent 37, Arturia MiniFreak and ASM Hydrasynth Deluxe; various pedals, control surfaces, virtual instruments and plugins for live and studio settings

Music Notation Software

Finale, Dorico

Graphic Design

Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Microsoft Word

Video Production

Final Cut Pro, ScreenFlow, DSLR and mobile video capture

OTHER PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Art of Reggae — Curriculum design, online music education platform

Launched Dec. 2021

Teaching musicians of all levels to play reggae keyboard and guitar with cultural grounding; ongoing content development and social media promotions

www.artofreggae.com

www.youtube.com/artofreggae

Vocalist

2013–present

- Studied technique and breathwork with Berklee vocal faculty Donna McElroy and Jeannie Gagne
- Lead and backing vocals on Liquid Revolution's "Dragonfly Taxi" and in live performance
- Lead/backing vocals with ¡Combo Sabroso! and Mix Up Mix Up (reggae, salsa, and American popular repertoire)
- Occasional backing vocals on Groundation tours

The Bob Marley Real Book

2007–present

- Completed transcriptions of about half of Marley's compositions in a Real Book format, including melody, chords and bass line. An ongoing project for possible publication.

[Inside Reggae](#) — Co-leader, experiential tours of Jamaican music and culture, Kingston, JA

2019–present

Reggae Drummer — Self-taught, with local performance and recording experience.

2010–present

DJ - "DJ Cklokwise"

2019–present

- Occasionally moonlights as a creative DJ using a Pioneer DJ deck and Serato DJ Pro with live keyboards and vocals

VIDEOS OF NOTE

Unmarked Routes

- [If We: Children](#) — studio performance, solo piano (original) 2025
- [Mbira Bêra](#) — screen art dance video (original composition & video editing) 2025
- [Transformic](#) — live performance (original) 2024

Groundation (Reggae)

- [Absolutely Clear](#) — written by Matt (except melody) 2022
- [Human Race](#) — single, One Rock album, performance 2022
- [Human Race](#) — short documentary on the making of this song 2022
- [If I](#) — clavinet solo, performance 2019
- [One But Ten](#) — organ solo, performance 2018

Educational

- [The Art of Playing Reggae Guitar](#) — viral instructional video, with guitarist Tuff Lion 2013
- Search "Art of Reggae" and see many reggae educational videos

The Liquid Revolution (original reggae)

- [Must Be Free](#) — performance of original composition 2014

- [Again and Again](#) — performance of original composition 2014

Mix Up Mix Up (Reggae-Jazz)

- [Medley of covers, one original](#) — video production & performance 2017

Afro-Cuban Style

- [La Comparsa](#) — (by Ernesto Lecuona) danzón style, solo piano, performance 2019
- [Sujetate la Lengua](#) (by Eddie Palmieri) — salsa style, performance 2017

Berklee Bob Marley Ensemble (Reggae)

- [No Woman No Cry](#) — student performance 2017
- [Rat Race](#) — student performance 2012

Voices From the Heart / Con Tutti (Gospel-influenced)

- [Let the Life I Lead](#) — audio/video production & performance 2020