

### **Short Form:**

*“Patiently and lovingly devotes himself to the song...Nothing but rapt attention to the song, to melody, to the way a great artist can make us feel” – Michael Steinman, Jazz Lives*

Hailed by *Jazz Journal* as a “mainstream tenor with a modest Rollins influence” and “remarkable” by *Toronto Music Report*, saxophonist Sam Taylor lives and performs in New York City. A Philadelphia native, Taylor is a recording artist on Cellar Live, with his latest 2022 release, *Let Go*, hitting the Jazz Week Charts Top 50 for 12 weeks. In support of the recording, that features trumpet great Terell Stafford, Taylor and Stafford performed a five concert tour of Canada in October of 2022. Past performance highlights include leading The Sam Taylor Trio on a five concert tour of Pacific Northwest and Canada; Smalls Jazz Club featuring Larry McKenna; The Sam Taylor Quintet performing two nights at The TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival 2018. Taylor is the recipient of New York Foundation for the Arts City Artist Corps Grant 2021. Additionally, Taylor serves as artistic director for The West Harlem Jazz Festival. In New York City, Taylor can be found playing throughout the week at steady engagements in Hamilton Heights, Harlem and Midtown Manhattan.

### **Full:**

*“Patiently and lovingly devotes himself to the song...Nothing but rapt attention to the song, to melody, to the way a great artist can make us feel” – Michael Steinman, Jazz Lives*

Sam Taylor’s true jazz education began during his three years at Philadelphia’s High School for Creative and Performing Arts. Immersed in the deep tradition of Philadelphia’s jazz community, Taylor studied and performed with Chris Farr, Matt Levy, and Len Murphy. Dedication and love for music extended into the summer months, where he participated in distinguished programs: The Tanglewood Institute, Berklee College of Music Summer Jazz Workshop, The School for Improvisational Music, and Pennsylvania Governor’s School for the Arts. After receiving The Dennis Sandole Foundation Jazz Award, publishing in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and performing with exclusive ensembles in all major venues of Philadelphia, Sam left at the age of seventeen for New York City.

In 2001 Sam began his studies at Purchase College State University of New York. The next four years proved crucial to Sam’s development, with classroom and bandstand mentoring from Todd Coolman, Ralph Lalama, Jon Faddis, Javon Jackson, Pete Malinverni and John Riley. Quickly recognized for his talent and dedication, Taylor was given an opportunity to perform in Groningen, Holland as a guest soloist with the The Noord-Nederlands Conservatorium Symphonic Jazz Orchestra. Other performance highlights included an awards ceremony for Dave Brubeck at The National Arts Club, premiering his compositions with Jon Faddis at the Central Presbyterian Church of New York City, and performing in an eightieth birthday celebration for James Moody at The Performing Arts Center. This performance with James Moody was particularly exciting, playing to a packed theatre with saxophone legends Jimmy Heath, Frank Wess, Joe Lovano, Steve Wilson, Mark Turner and Ralph Lalama.

Since graduating in 2005 with a Bachelor of Music, Cum Laude, Sam has become an active member of the New York City jazz community. Featuring his own projects and collaborations, he has performed at numerous venues including Smalls Jazz Club, The National Arts Club, Cornelia Street Cafe, Fat Cat, and Webster Hall. Taylor can be found playing throughout the week at steady engagements in Hamilton Heights, Harlem and Midtown Manhattan. In addition to his busy performance schedule, Taylor also serves as artistic director for The West Harlem Jazz Festival.

Taylor’s debut recording, *My Future Just Passed*, (released on Cellar Live, August 2015) was hailed by the *Toronto Music Report* as a “remarkable release”, with *All About Jazz* describing his playing as “wise beyond his years”. It features the masterful Taro Okamoto on drums along with bassist Aidan O’Donnell.

*Along The Way*, Taylor's second album was released on Cellar Live, November 2017 featuring saxophone legend, Larry McKenna along with a top tier New York rhythm section: Jeb Patton, piano; Neal Miner, bass; Pete Van Nostrand, drums. In celebration of the release, Taylor performed along side Larry McKenna for two nights at The TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival 2018. Taylor lead his group on a five concert tour of the Pacific Northwest and Canada in January of 2020, including The Yukon Performing Arts Center and Yardsbird Suite.

In October of 2022, Taylor will release his third album for Cellar Live, *Let Go*, featuring trumpet master Terell Stafford. Recorded at Van Gelder Studios in January of 2022, a time when much of what we believed in as a society was being redefined and reimagined, Taylor chose to invite his musical elders to join him on a journey of generosity and letting go. Surrendering to the music he loves, interpreting the songs and sharing with others, *Let Go*, remains true to Sam Taylor's musical values. There is an emphasis on mentorship and tradition, as Terell Stafford was a childhood hero of the young saxophonist while in Philadelphia. Joined by Jeb Patton (piano), Neal Miner (bass) and Willie Jones III (drums), Taylor and Stafford joyfully perform a collection of songs by the great Barry Harris, Benny Golson, and Coleman Hawkins, along with interpretations of rarely played standards from the American Songbook. The title track, *Let Go*, is an original by Taylor, his first to be recorded. The quintet swings hard and with purpose, honoring the spirit of those who came before, with a clear message: Music is an act of giving. Let go.

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